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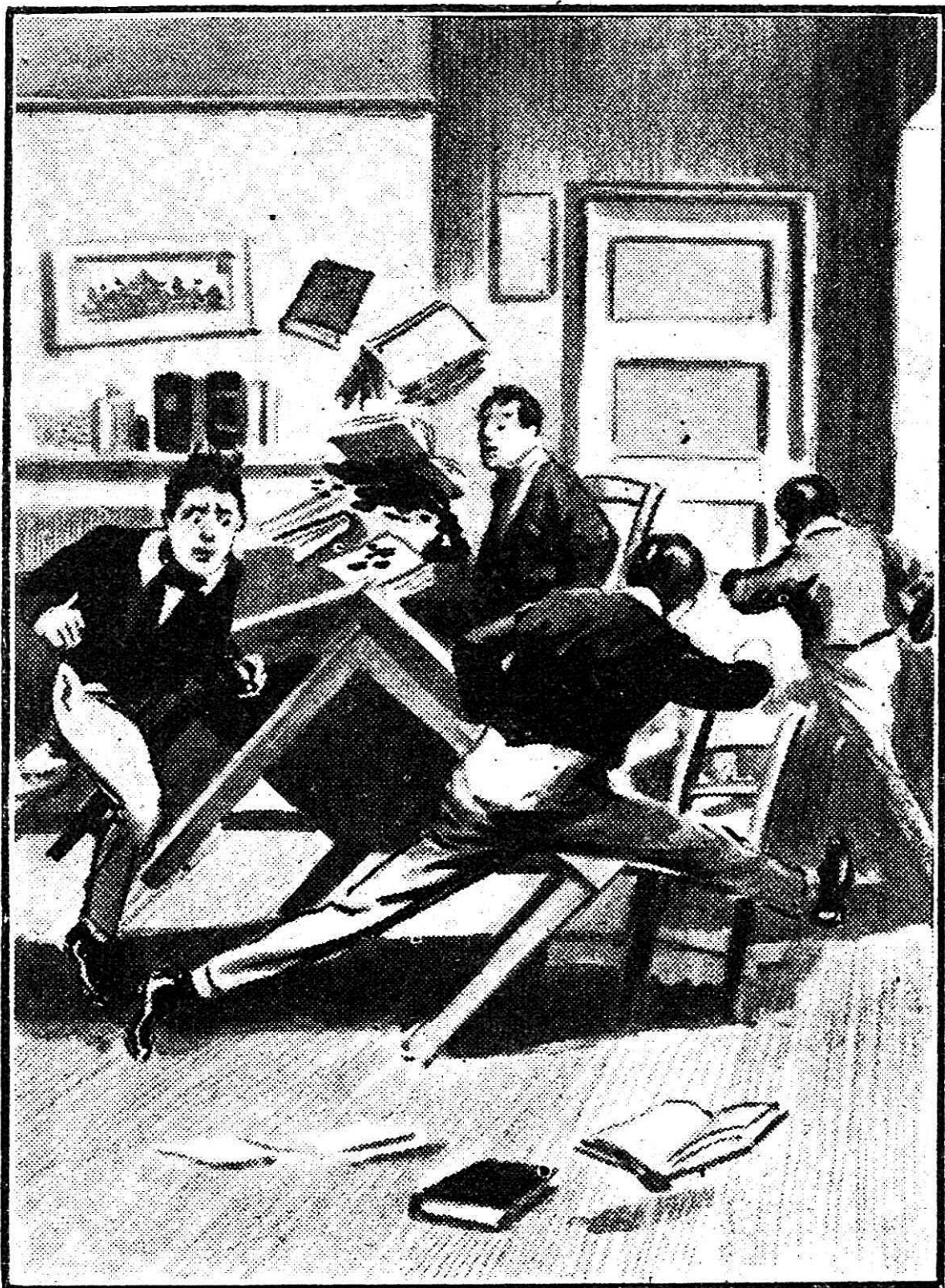


This Week's Grand Long St. Frank's Story:—

JACK GREY'S TEMPTATION!

Or, THE TORMENT OF CONSCIENCE.

Magnificent Model Steam Locomotive Offered to Readers!



The table reared up like a wild thing, and Jack Grey's books and papers were swept into his lap like an avalanche. Incidentally, the inkpot toppled over and poured its contents over the entire collection.



JACK GREY'S TEMPTATION

or,
**The Torment
of Conscience**

An absorbing Long Complete
Story of School Life and Adventure
at ST. FRANK'S College. Its strong
human appeal will arouse the deepest
sympathy in the heart of every
reader for the hero of this splendid
narrative.

(RELATED THROUGHOUT
BY NIPPER.)

CHAPTER I.

A BLOW FOR JACK GREY.

“**A**NYTHING the matter, dad?”
Jack Grey, of the Remove at St. Frank's, asked that question as he entered the library at Grey Towers—his father's country home in Berkshire. Jack would soon be off for the new term at St. Frank's, for this was the end of the holidays.

Indeed, the junior was due to start off for the old school within a couple of hours. He was not feeling particularly bright; for, somehow, he could see that his father was not his usual cheery self.

Jack had enjoyed the Christmas holidays very much, and at first he had looked forward to going back to school, where he would meet old friends like Reginald Pitt, and De Valerie, and all the rest of the fellows.

But during the last day or so, although Sir Crawford Grey had made a pretence of

being jocular, he had not been very successful. And Jack knew well enough that his father was secretly worried.

“Eh? Oh!” said Sir Crawford, as he started forward in his chair. “Coming to have a word with me, eh? You will soon be off now, my boy. You've only another hour or so at home.”

“Yes, I know that, dad,” said the junior, as he walked over to his father's chair. “But what's wrong? You've been looking so thoughtful and worried lately.”

“Have I?”

“Yes, rather.”

“Well, for one thing, I don't like to lose you, Jack,” said Sir Crawford, patting his son on the arm. “We've been very happy together here, and life is rather lonely in this old place.”

Jack looked at his father curiously.

“That's not the reason, dad,” he said firmly. “You can't spoof me like that, you know. I'm jolly certain there's something

else. It's rotten to see you with that frown on your brow, and—"

"Well, my lad, the fact is, I—" Sir Crawford paused and rose to his feet. "Sit down, Jack. I want to have a few words with you—serious words. Upon the whole, it is better that you should know—although I had half decided to let you go back to St. Frank's without mentioning the matter."

Jack Grey sat down, looking puzzled.

"Is it something I've done, dad?" he asked wonderingly.

Sir Crawford smiled rather sadly.

"There are not many faults that I can find with you, Jack," he said in a quiet voice. "In a way, I greatly regret that I should have to speak to you on this subject at all, because I fear it will be a big blow. But you are strong, and I think you will be able to stand it."

"But—but I don't understand—"

"Of course you don't," said Sir Crawford. "You have asked me why I have been looking so worried. Well, there is a reason—a very big reason. Jack, you must prepare yourself for some very bad news."

The junior opened his eyes wide.

"Bad news?" he repeated. "I—I don't know what you mean, dad! I had an idea that things were a bit wrong, but I can't see—"

"Wait—wait!" interrupted Sir Crawford, standing on the hearthrug, with his back to the cheerful fire. "Until fairly recently, I was what most people would consider a rich man. But I am no longer rich."

"Why, I—I thought you had tons of money, dad!" exclaimed Jack in astonishment. "I mean, we've got this great place, with lots of servants, and motor cars, and—and all sorts of things!"

"It is never wise to judge by appearances, Jack," said Sir Crawford quietly. "If I went into full details you would not understand. But it would be cruel to let you go back to St. Frank's in ignorance of the plain truth. I am no longer rich, Jack—I am well nigh penniless."

Jack jumped up aghast.

"But—but it can't be true, dad!" he said huskily.

"It is true—I would not joke on such a subject."

For a few moments there was silence, and then Jack slipped a hand through his father's arm.

"Well, after all, money isn't everything, dad!" he said softly. "I expect we can be just as happy—"

"My boy—my boy!" broke in Sir Crawford. "You don't seem to understand—you don't seem to appreciate the significance of what I am telling you. Before you come back from St. Frank's at the end of the winter term, Grey Towers will no longer be our home."

"Oh!"

"It will be sold, and I shall be elsewhere!" said Sir Crawford, biting his lip. "A big place of this nature runs away with

a great deal of money. It is impossible to keep it going. Big changes must take place, Jack."

"But why, dad?" asked the junior quickly. "How has it happened? I can't understand the reason—"

"A very few words will be sufficient," interrupted the father. "During the last few months, my boy, I have been speculating. I am not usually rash in such matters, but certain circumstances—which I cannot go into now—almost compelled me to act as I did. But the stark fact remains that my financial position is now a very precarious one."

"How—how awfully rotten!" muttered Jack, sinking into his chair again. "I never dreamed of this, dad! I hadn't the faintest idea! And I shall be going on just the same as ever at St. Frank's while you're shouldering all the worry and the trouble. It doesn't seem right, dad."

His father paced up and down for a few moments.

"There is something else," he said quietly. "And this, Jack, is something that concerns you far more than it concerns me. I find it very difficult to say what I have to say, but you must prepare to bid all your friends good-bye at the end of this present term."

Jack started up again, a catch in his throat.

"Say—say good-bye to my friends?" he asked huskily. "Oh, dad! But you don't mean—"

"I mean that this term will be your last at St. Frank's," interrupted Sir Crawford. "I have tried in every way possible to discover a way whereby you could remain at the school. But the expenses are enormous—the fees at St. Frank's are very high, Jack. This must be your last term."

The junior had gone pale, and he stood there, almost dazed, clenching his fists, and staring straight before him. It seemed as though the heavens had fallen.

"My last term!" he muttered dully. "Oh, dad, you don't mean it! You can't mean it! I—I've to get up into the Fifth—and then the Sixth! And Oxford afterwards! We were talking all about it in the summer-time; don't you remember? You told me I should be at St. Frank's for two or three years yet."

"Since then, as I have already told you, the whole position is changed," said Sir Crawford quietly. "During the last three or four days I have wondered if I should tell you or not. But it is better that the blow should come now—far better. It would be an even greater shock later on."

Jack tried to control himself.

"But—but if things are so bad, how can I stay at St. Frank's, even for this term?" he asked. "Perhaps I had better stay away altogether, dad. Don't you think that would be as well?"

Sir Crawford shook his head.

"You may as well have the benefit of this one term," he said. "Such matters have

not troubled you, I suppose; but the fees at St. Frank's are payable in advance, and so there is nothing to prevent you going back to school for the spring term. But after that—Well, Jack, I don't exactly know what will happen after that. But there is plenty of time for plans to be made."

The junior had very little to say. He was thunderstruck. The news had come to him like a blow between the eyes. It had been so unexpected, so amazingly dramatic.

He had taken it for granted that his father was rich, and the very idea of leaving St. Frank's, because Sir Crawford couldn't afford the fees, had never entered his head. And if such an idea had come, he would have laughed at it with scorn.

But there was no mistaking Sir Crawford's tone, and his sad, grave expression.

The thing was true—dreadfully true.

He was going back to St. Frank's for the last time! He was destined to remain in the Remove; he would not even see the senior school! And he had had such hopes of doing big things in the Fifth and Sixth, and he had dreamed of appearing in the Senior Eleven. But all that was over now—it was never to be. And Jack Grey, as he tried to adjust his thoughts, felt a lump deep within him which almost made him choke.

The disappointment was terrible.

Sir Crawford took his son by the shoulders and held him tightly.

"In a time like this, Jack, you must be brave," he said softly. "It is a test for you—a cruel, severe test. Heaven knows, I have tried to spare you, but it would have been madness to keep you in the dark. And I want you to promise me that you will not tell the other boys."

"Oh, but they'll have to know, sooner or later, dad!"

"Ultimately—yes," agreed Sir Crawford. "But I cannot bear to think of your school companions making fun of our misfortunes. Your friends, I know, will sympathise, but there are others to consider."

"Chaps like Fullwood, you mean!" said Jack. "Oh, they'd crow all right!"

"For that reason I wish to give them no opportunity," said Sir Crawford. "And you cannot tell one without telling the other. So, Jack, you must give me your word that you will keep quiet—"

"Oh!" gasped Jack suddenly.

A gleaming flash of hope had come into his eyes. His face was flushed, and he stood there quivering with sudden excitement. His father looked at him very seriously, and not without concern.

"My boy—my boy—"

"It's—it's all right, dad!" shouted Jack with a whoop. "I've just thought of something! I've got a grand, topping idea!"

"Good gracious me!"

"Yes, and if I'm lucky I shall be able to stay at St. Frank's after all!" said Jack eagerly. "Oh, why didn't I think of it

before? It's the only way, dad—and I'll do it!"

Sir Crawford Grey looked at his son with even greater wonder than before.

What was this idea which had made Jack so excited?

CHAPTER II.

THE ONLY CHANCE.



"**D**ETERMINATION is all it needs, dad!" exclaimed Jack tensely. "And I'll win if it's humanly possible!"

"I fail to understand—"

"Listen!" interrupted the junior. "I know it's jolly selfish of me, but I'm simply dying to stay at St. Frank's, dad! It's terrible that this misfortune should have come upon us, but that's no reason why I should only have one more term at the old school—"

"Yes, but I have already told you how impossible it is for you to remain," interrupted Sir Crawford patiently. "My dear boy, the expenses will be greater than I can undertake."

"But you won't have to undertake them—that's just the point!" said Jack quickly.

"Upon my soul!" What do you mean?"

"Why, you can't pay the exes., and so I'll go all out for the Lytton Trust Scholarship!" exclaimed Jack excitedly. "The exams are held every January, dad, and the fellow who wins is entitled to stay at St. Frank's for two years free. If I can only win that scholarship, I shall be as happy as anything!"

Sir Crawford looked rather serious.

"It is a plucky idea," he said. "But what is this scholarship exactly? It hardly seems to be the type of—"

"Oh, there's nothing demeaning about it, dad," interrupted Jack. "It's especially for juniors, and in other years some of the richest chaps have won it. There's the honour as well, you know—and that's the main thing. There's no need for anybody to know that we are stony."

Sir Crawford smiled rather curiously.

"I hardly think we are so badly off as that," he said. "Undoubtedly, a crash is coming—and we shall be obliged to sacrifice Grey Towers. But I want to hear more about this scholarship."

"I don't know the exact details, pater, but you can be absolutely satisfied that nobody will ever know that it's a necessity in my case," exclaimed Jack. "All the chaps believe that you're rich, and they'll never have any reason to think otherwise. They'll think I'm entering for this scholarship just for the honour of it. I sha'n't breathe a word, and if I win it'll mean that I shall remain at St. Frank's for two years more, and it won't cost you a penny."

Jack's father patted the boy on the shoulder.

"I'm proud of you, my lad—more proud

than I have ever been before," he said quietly. "I knew you would take this well, but I did not dare to hope that you would show such pluck and determination. Splendid! If you win, it will be a triumph."

"I'll do everything that's humanly possible, dad," declared Jack. "I'll chuck up football and everything else. I'll do nothing but swot from morning till night! And I'll win that scholarship! I've got to!"

"That's the spirit, Jack—that's the spirit!" said Sir Crawford proudly. "It grieves me that you should be forced into it in such a way as this—but it is not within our power to interfere with fate."

"If things are a bit rocky, it's up to me to do the best I can," said Jack. "I'll try as I've never tried before."

"And you'll succeed," declared Sir Crawford. "I know you, Jack—and I've every confidence. And do not worry. When you get to St. Frank's, try to forget all about Grey Towers and the trouble which is coming. Confine yourself to your own task—I am capable of looking after myself. I shall still have a small income, but money will not be plentiful. Win this scholarship, and your future will be assured."

It was not long before Jack Grey took his departure. He was fired by this sudden decision. His father couldn't afford to keep him at St. Frank's after this one term, but if he could only win the Lytton Trust Scholarship, he would be entitled to remain for another two years. And if other boys could win it, so could he! When his whole future depended upon it, it was quite certain that Jack would fight as he had never fought before.

After all, he was only a boy, and he did not fully appreciate the nature of Sir Crawford's difficulties. The one fact which went home was that his father had lost his money, and things were in a very serious position. And there was this scholarship waiting to be won.

The very fact of entering for it did not mean that a fellow was necessarily hard up. For there was a great deal of honour in winning such a prize. It was one of the most important scholarships of the school.

And it so happened that the examinations would be coming on quite early in this next term. Jack Grey would be able to enter his name, and then work away at full pressure.

With such an incentive, he would stand an excellent chance of winning. Quite apart from this, Jack was one of the brightest scholars in the Remove, and there was no telling what he could do once he made up his mind to it. Determination and perseverance are great things.

By the time the junior arrived at St. Frank's, dusk was beginning to fall, for the short winter's day was coming to an end.

There were many signs of bustling activity.

It was the first day of the new term, and fellows had been arriving all day, by dif-

ferent trains. It was cold, clear, and freezing. Bright lights gleamed out from the windows of the Ancient House and the College House. And in the Triangle there were numbers of juniors.

Jack had only got half-way across when Reginald Pitt came dashing over towards him. Pitt grasped his hand warmly.

"Good!" he exclaimed heartily. "I've been looking for you for hours, old son! I thought you'd turn up long before this."

Jack grinned.

"Rats!" he said. "I told you I shouldn't be here until teatime. Is everything all right in the study?"

"You bet!" replied Reggie. "Fire going—tea all ready, and tons of cheerfulness. T.T.'s as dotty as ever, and——"

"Hallo! Here's another of 'em!" exclaimed Edward Oswald Handforth, striding up, and giving Jack Grey a slap on the back which nearly sent him flying. "How goes it, my lad? Feeling fit for great things this term? We've got to beat all records at football, you know."

"Yes, rather!" agreed Jack. "We'll——" He paused abruptly, and bit his lip.

"Well?"

"Oh, nothing," said Jack.

"What do you mean—nothing?" demanded Handforth. "We were talking about football, and——"

"I know we were," interrupted Grey. "But I don't think I shall be able to join the Eleven this term. I'm going to work hard. Sports are all very well, but they take up a lot of time, you know."

Handforth and Pitt stared.

"What rot!" said Handy. "You're dotty! I don't want you to get a swelled head, but it's a well known fact that you're one of the best forwards in the junior Eleven. You've got to play."

"He's only trying to be funny," grinned Pitt.

"Of course, I ought to be in the forward-line, strictly speaking," went on Handforth. "Everybody knows what I can do!"

"Everybody does!" agreed Pitt.

An argument would probably have followed, but a new arrival led the conversation into other channels. An elegant junior came lounging across the Triangle, and he waved his hand genially as he approached.

"What-ho! What-ho! What-ho!" exclaimed Archie Glenhorne. "So here we are again, what? I mean to say, all the merry old lads of the village hobnobbing together, and all that sort of thing. The gathering of the clans, so to speak, and so forth. How goes it, old lads?"

"We've just been talking about football, Archie," said Pitt. "It wouldn't be a bad idea if you decided to go in for it, you know. How does the scheme strike you?"

Archie adjusted his monocle.

"Well, as a matter of fact, it strikes me dashed severely," he replied. "I mean to say the whole thing seems to be somewhat ghastly. Football, as it were, is a price-

less sort of exercise. But it's liable to be frightfully strenuous. I mean to say, it assails a chappie in large chunks. I rather think that the good old game is somewhat out of my line!"

"Well, we won't discuss football now," said Pitt. "It's teatime, and I'm hungry. Come on, Jack. We'll get indoors. I dare say you can do with a snack after your journey."

"Rather," said Jack Grey. "Come on."

He was not feeling quite so cheerful as usual. The mention of football brought home to him the stern nature of the task he had set himself. If he was to enter for the Lytton Trust Scholarship, there would be no time for sport of any kind. It would be hard work during every spare moment.

And the sudden realisation that he would have to drop football came to him as a bit of a shock. He was glad that Pitt had changed the subject, and that they were just going in to tea.

In the lobby they met Larry Scott, a junior who had arrived only shortly before the Christmas holidays. He had one extraordinary trait in his character—it was an utter impossibility for him to speak anything but the actual truth.

"Hallo, Scott!" exclaimed Jack, trying to make himself cheerful. "Still the same as ever, I suppose? No fibs?"

"Why should I tell fibs?" asked Larry Scott smilingly. "I can't quite understand you fellows, you know. You all seem to think there's something queer about me. But I can't see it."

"A fellow can never see his own peculiarities," chuckled Pitt. "How did you enjoy your Christmas holidays, by the way?"

"Not very much."

"You stayed here at St. Frank's, didn't you?"

"Yes."

"That was pretty rotten, I'll admit," said Grey. "Well, we won't keep you, old man. Tea is waiting for us."

They passed on, and entered Study E, in the Remove passage. The little apartment was looking very cheery and bright. A warm fire glowed in the grate, the table was laid for tea, and Timothy Tucker was already making inroads into the good things.

"Why, you glutton!" said Pitt indignantly. "Why couldn't you wait until we all started?"

T. T. blinked.

"My dear sir, I exceedingly regret that my manner should appear to be unseemly," he said mildly. "But I am hungry. Admitted—admitted! I found it quite impossible to wait——"

"You ought to be boiled!" said Pitt bluntly.

"Really, my dear sir!" protested Tucker. "How dare you? Do you realise who you are talking to? Please remember that I am——"

"We know who you are, and we can't



"Jack, this must be your last term at St. Frank's," said Sir Crawford Grey quietly. The junior had gone pale, and he stood there, almost dazed, clenching his fists, and staring straight before him.

forget it!" interrupted Reggie. "But we'll let it go at that. Take your coat off, Jack, and squat down. And after tea you've got to tell me what the trouble is."

"The trouble?" said Jack quickly.

"My dear ass, you can't deny it!" said Pitt. "It's written all over your face. Ever since you arrived, I've seen that there's something on your mind. And you've got to tell your uncle all about it."

Jack Grey sat down at the table, very thoughtful and silent. He had told himself that he would never allow any of the other fellows to guess his secret. And yet, within the first half-hour of his arrival his own study chums had seen that something was amiss.

It was rather awkward, and Jack hardly knew what to do. He couldn't explain, for he had promised his father that he would

tell nobody. Jack could see that things would be very awkward in the immediate future.

CHAPTER III.

WHERE THERE'S A WILL!



REGINALD PITT sat back with a satisfied sigh.

"Good!" he exclaimed. "The sardines were topping, the beef patties were first-class, and the sandwiches were ripping. As for the cakes and the cream puffs, I've never tasted better. Good for Mrs. Hake!"

"She always excels herself on the first day of term," said Jack.

"And now we've finished tea, you've got to get busy on the explaining," went on Pitt. "No, don't start talking; I'm just going to put the thing into a few neat, concise words."

"But there's nothing wrong——"

"Rats!" said Reggie. "I left you a blithe, cheery, amiable chap, with a perpetual smile of geniality. And now what do I find? Gaze at yourself in the mirror. Gaze, O youth, and see the difference!"

"But——"

"Don't I keep telling you to dry up?" demanded Pitt. "I'm doing all the talking here. What do I see? Instead of the smile of geniality, there is a dark and lowering frown. A vast worry is on your mind, my lad. There's another point. What was that rubbish you told Handforth about not playing for the Eleven this term?"

"It wasn't rot."

"Did you really mean it seriously?"

"Yes."

"But, my dear ass, you're one of the best forwards in the eleven," protested Pitt. "We can't possibly lose you. What's more, we're not going to. Lots of chaps come back with dotty ideas about working hard——"

"You don't understand," said Jack. "Honestly, Reggie, I'm going to work. I've decided to enter for the Lytton Trust Scholarship."

Pitt stared blankly.

"But—but you must be mad!" he exclaimed amazedly. "Why in the name of wonder do you want to enter for a scholarship like that? You're booked to remain at St. Frank's, anyhow, and there's no need for you to work yourself to a skeleton so that you can stay here for two years without paying any fees."

"There's the honour——"

"You can get plenty of honour without being dotty!" interrupted Pitt. "Look here, Jack, your pater's a rich man. There's absolutely no need for you to go in for this Lytton business. Wait until later on; there'll be plenty of other scholarships—if you're so keen upon honours."

"I promised my father that I'd enter

for it, and go all out to win," said Jack quietly. "It's a big thing, Reggie, and think how glorious it will be if I can win."

"How will it be glorious?"

"Well, winning a scholarship is generally considered to be pretty decent."

"You haven't won it yet, and it'll need a tremendous lot of hard work," said Pitt.

"Of course, I'd back you any day. When you really get to work, you can make things hum. But is it worth it, old man?"

"Yes, it is!"

Pitt could see that Jack was very determined, but he was greatly puzzled as to why the junior should have come to such a decision. For he believed that Sir Crawford Grey was a very rich man. It seemed ridiculous that Jack should throw up football and all other sports for such an unnecessary prize.

Pitt said very little more on the subject then. He had an idea that Jack would alter his mind after a day or two. When football got going, it would be very strange if Jack resisted the temptation.

But Grey was absolutely determined.

Soon after tea he made his way to Mr. Crowell's study. The Remove Form-master was busy at his desk, and he greeted Jack warmly. Mr. Crowell knew who his best scholars were.

"Well, Grey, I hope you mean to work hard this term," he said cheerily. "I've got very little to grumble about, but it's my opinion that we can always go one better. We must always aim for the bigger things, my boy."

"Yes, sir," said Jack. "I've come to you now, because I'd like to have my name entered for the Lytton Trust Scholarship."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Mr. Crowell. "Splendid, Grey—splendid! But it will need a great deal of hard work; the examinations are very severe. Hard work and practically no play, Grey. Do you realise that?"

"Yes, sir."

"It is a noble effort on your part, my boy—a splendid decision," said Mr. Crowell. "Particularly as you will be striving for the honour alone."

"Yes, sir," said Jack, in a low voice.

Somehow or other, he felt that he was doing something underhand. Everybody would believe that he had entered for the scholarship just because he wanted to do something praiseworthy. And yet, in actual truth, the winning of the scholarship was a necessity.

If he failed to win, his career at St. Frank's would be over.

But he couldn't speak of this. He had promised his father that he would tell nobody of the real reason. He was not even permitted to inform Reggie Pitt—for Sir Crawford had made no exceptions.

Jack was beginning to feel that the thing would be a bit more difficult than he had

at first imagined. But he was going through with it. At the same time, he felt guilty.

Mr. Crowell rose to his feet, and took the junior by the shoulders.

"It always pleases me greatly to find one of my boys striving for some worthy object," he said, in a fatherly kind of way. "I wish you every success, Grey."

"Thank you, sir!"

"I do not think there will be many entrants this year," went on the Form-master. "In any case, there is nobody who is in want of the financial benefit which attaches to this scholarship. After all, that is merely a detail. Of late years, the scholarship has been sought after merely because of its high aim."

"But—but doesn't it mean that the fellow who wins can stay at St. Frank's for two years without paying any fees, sir?"

Mr. Crowell smiled.

"Precisely," he said. "But I rather fancy that your father will not concern himself much on that point. In all probability, he will add to his charity list—if you win. Come, Grey, we will have a few words with Mr. Lee. I will get him to enter your name at once."

"Thank you, sir!"

They left the room, went down two or three corridors, and then arrived at Nelson Lee's study. The Housemaster detective was in, and he was exceedingly pleased when Mr. Crowell explained the reason for the visit.

"I have always known you to be one of Mr. Crowell's best scholars, Grey, but I hardly thought you were one of the studious type," smiled Nelson Lee. "I rather thought that you were keen upon sports."

"So I am, sir; but this term I thought about going in for something better," said Grey. "I sha'n't be doing much at games now, sir."

"Well, that's rather a pity," said Lee. "However, I must not grumble at you, my boy. Possibly you will be able to find time for sport later on. Happily, the examinations take place after three or four weeks, and then you will have a free time. But I am pleased that you are showing such earnestness."

Jack was rather glad when he was allowed to go free. He took great care to avoid Reggie Pitt as much as possible. For he had an idea that Pitt would question him—and Jack feared this.

It was rather a noisy evening, upon the whole.

It was the first day of term, and it would be some little time before all the fellows shook down into the usual order of things. There were late arrivals, too—and one or two new fellows.

As captain of the Remove, I had given the new kids a look over, and I was not particularly impressed with them. At any rate, there was nobody of any note among the new batch.

Handforth, of course, made himself very much in evidence, as usual. Before bedtime came he had indulged in at least four fights. And Church and McClure were already looking somewhat battered about.

In some strange way, Study D seemed to exert some influence over Handforth. On holiday he would treat Church and McClure in quite a friendly way. But as soon as he got them into Study D, and the least argument commenced, trouble followed. Anyhow, Church and McClure were not very happy.

But by the following morning, after we had all turned out to the tune of the rising bell—most of the fellows very reluctantly—the juniors began to fall into the old habits.

Jack Grey was one of the first down.

He was not himself this morning. He had slept badly, and he was feeling very out of sorts. Not that he was scared by the work that lay in front of him. But he felt that he was doing something in secret, and Jack was one of the most open fellows under the sun.

He found himself in the lobby, practically alone.

And he wandered rather aimlessly across to the notice-board. Then he was attracted by a sheet of paper which was pinned upon the green baize in a prominent position. He couldn't fail to see it, for it was the only notice on the board.

"My hat!" he muttered. "Mr. Lee hasn't lost much time!"

The notice was in Nelson Lee's handwriting, and announced the fact that Jack Grey, of the Remove, had entered his name for the Lytton Trust Scholarship. Other fellows were invited to send their names in as quickly as possible if they wished to enter. The news went on to give further particulars.

And while Jack was looking at it, De Valerie and Somerton and Pitt, and one or two others strolled up.

"Hallo! What's this?" said De Valerie. "Well, I'm blessed! Do you mean to tell me that you've entered for the scholarship?"

"Yes," said Grey.

"But what on earth for?"

"It's worth trying for, isn't it?"

"Well, I dare say; but why the dickens do you need free schooling?" asked De Valerie. "Your pater hasn't threatened to take you away, I suppose?"

"Oh, don't be dotty!" exclaimed Jack, flushing. "But he particularly wants me to do well this term, and I thought it would please him if I entered for the Lytton Trust."

"Well, you've got your work cut out, that's all," said Owen major. "It's a pretty stiff exam., by all I've heard. I wouldn't enter for it if I was offered ten quid! Too much like hard work, to my mind!"

"And what about games?" inquired Somerton. "How do you reckon to put in

time at football? One of the leading lights of the Junior Eleven oughtn't to enter for scholarships!"

"I've entered, and if I can, I'll win!" declared Jack. "A chap must try to do something good while he's at school. Being pretty keen on games isn't much of a recommendation in after life."

"Oh, leave him alone!" grinned Owen major. "He'll be fed up long before the exam. comes on. And just wait until football starts! He'll forget all about scholarships then, I'll bet!"

Fullwood strolled up, accompanied by Gulliver and Bell. The three young rascals of the Remove looked at the notice-board and then grinned.

"What's this?" said Ralph Leslie Fullwood. "Grey entering for the Lytton? I always thought he was rollin' in money! His pater is Sir Crawford Grey—who's got pots of it!"

"Well, what about it?" asked De Valerie.

"Oh, nothin', but it looks a bit queer," said Fullwood in a sneering tone. "Perhaps the family fortunes have declined."

"What do you mean?" demanded Jack quietly.

"My dear chap, I don't want to start an argument," said Fullwood. "But it's generally reckoned that a fellow who enters for the Lytton Scholarship is jolly hard up."

"What about the honour of winning such a prize?" asked Grey.

"The honour?" repeated Fullwood. "Not much of an honour, is it? It simply means that your pater is broke, or somethin' like that. Still, it's not my business. I don't want to butt in. If your pater is too hard up to pay your fees, you have my sympathy; or, perhaps, he's mean?"

Jack Grey acted on the second.

Crash!

His fist shot out and plunged into Fullwood's face with great force. The leader of Study A had sneered in the most abominable manner—his tone had been ten times more aggravating than his words.

"Yow—ow!" howled Fullwood. "Yar—ooooh!"

He staggered back with a wild yell, clutched helplessly at the air, and then collapsed in a heap upon the floor.

"Bravo!" exclaimed a voice in the doorway. "I like that right swing of yours, young 'un."

All the fellows turned and saw a cheery-faced stranger just within the lobby.

CHAPTER IV.

THE COMING OF MR. CLIFFORD.



FULLWOOD picked himself up, snarling furiously.

"You—you cowardly rotter!" he exclaimed, breathing hard. "Is that what you call playin' the

game? Hittin' out at me like that, without givin' any warnin'—"

"If you insult my father again I'll hit out in just the same way," exclaimed Jack sensely. "You low-down cad! All you can do is to sneer and make yourself deliberately unpleasant! If you say another word to me I'll knock you down! Understand?"

Fullwood went red with wrath.

"It was a foul blow!" he said hotly.

"Not at all!" put in the stranger, striding forward. "I not only saw the blow, but I heard the provocative remark which occasioned it. And I must say that the punch was very well deserved."

"Oh!" snapped Fullwood. "An' what's it got to do with you?"

It was bad enough for the fellows to be crowing over him, but he wasn't going to allow this stranger to butt in. The man was comparatively young—not more than thirty at the most.

He was big, broad-shouldered, and clean-shaven. He was quite good looking, too; and there was a certain geniality about his face which could not be overlooked. His eyes twinkled merrily. He was attired in a quiet suit and a tweed overcoat, with a soft hat, and a handbag.

"What has it got to do with me?" he said pleasantly, as he looked at Fullwood. "Well, it so happens that I'm rather interested in matters of this kind. And I earnestly hope that that punch hurt you."

"Hear, hear!" said De Valerie. "Good for you, sir!"

"Rather!" said Pitt.

Fullwood scowled.

"I don't care whether you're interested or not, you're not goin' to say things like that!" he exclaimed fiercely. "I'll jolly well have you kicked out of the school unless you can be civil! I expect you've only come here, tryin' to sell somethin'."

"How do you guess these things?" asked the stranger.

"It's written all over you—anybody can see you're nothing but a cheap commercial traveller," sneered Fullwood. "And the sooner you clear out the better."

"Thanks awfully," said the stranger, with a smile. "We seem to be getting along quite famously. In case it may interest you, my name's Clifford—Mr. Harold Clifford."

"It doesn't interest me in the least," snapped Fullwood.

"And your little guess just now was quite a long way off the mark," went on the other. "In future, young man, it will be necessary for you to address me as 'Sir.' How will you like that?"

"I don't know what you're talkin' about!" growled Fullwood.

Mr. Clifford smiled.

"Then, perhaps, I had better explain that I have come for good," he said cheerfully.

"For good?"

"Exactly."

"You're talking out of your hat!"

"I sincerely hope not," said Mr. Clifford.

"Before we go any further—before you get yourself into really serious trouble—it would

be just as well to explain that I have come to St. Frank's by appointment."

"Why, of course!" exclaimed Pitt eagerly. "I've just remembered. You must be the new Junior sports master, sir!"

Mr. Clifford bowed.

"Somebody, apparently, is possessed of brains," he smiled. "Yes, my lad, you have guessed my guilty secret. I have come to St. Frank's for the purpose of instructing the young idea into the mysterious ways of football and boxing and wrestling, and so forth."

"Jolly glad to meet you, sir," said Pitt frankly.

"Rather, sir!"

"Welcome to St. Frank's, sir!"

"Hear, hear!"

Mr. Clifford smiled as the chorus of voices greeted him.

"This is very nice of you, boys," he said.

"I hardly expected to receive such a cheerful welcome. Good business! There's nothing like being pally, eh? Let's all get together and make friends."

Fullwood looked rather startled.

"Is this true?" he demanded.

"Is what true?"

"Are you the new sports master—"

"I am not in the habit of telling lies," interrupted Mr. Clifford curtly. "I should not like to start my career at St. Frank's by inflicting punishment, but I shall be compelled to do so unless you refrain from queries of that kind. My boy, you can go, but I shall not always be as lenient as this."

Fullwood opened his mouth to make some hot retort, but thought better of it. There was something very fiery in Mr. Clifford's eye at that moment—something that looked rather dangerous.

And Fullwood had enough sense to vanish.

"Judging by the lad's attitude, I do not imagine him to be typical of the average St. Frank's schoolboy," said Mr. Clifford quietly.

"My hat! I should hope not, sir!" declared Pitt. His name's Fullwood, but I won't say any more. It won't take you long to find things out, sir. I reckon we're very lucky to have a sports master this term. Things ought to go on better, although Nipper's a jolly good skipper."

I met Mr. Clifford soon afterwards, and I shared the opinion of the Remove—and this opinion was, that Mr. Clifford was one of the best. He made himself extremely popular with the fellows within the first hour of his arrival.

The juniors were particularly pleased because Mr. Clifford had complimented Jack Grey upon the manner in which he had knocked Fullwood down. There was something rather rich in that.

And it soon became evident that Mr. Clifford was not the kind of man to let any grass grow under his feet.

The very next day was a half-holiday, and by this time Mr. Clifford was a recognised inhabitant of St. Frank's. On the quiet, the

guy'nor had told me that the new sports master was one of the best athletes in the kingdom, and he was as keen as mustard upon every kind of sport you could think of.

He was a University man, too, and had recently been a sports instructor at one of the other famous British public schools.

Jack Grey had commenced his self-imposed task in earnest.

He had been working hard, and was determined to work hard during the afternoon. He would have nothing to do with football. If once he gave way, and started, he would find the other work ten times more difficult.

Accordingly, directly after dinner, Jack Grey shut himself up in Study E with his books. And there he sat at the table, with his hands to his ears, so that he could shut out all other sounds.

It was particularly galling that this day should be so sunny and fresh and invigorating. It was a day of all days for football. The very thought of remaining indoors was enough to give anybody a pain.

But Jack pushed all these ideas aside.

He had to be firm. Where was his determination? And then he thought of the possibilities. His very future depended upon him working hard now. Football could wait.

It was Mr. Clifford's idea to hold a practice match, for he was rather keen upon finding out how the juniors shaped. He had taken me aside, and he had asked me for the names of my best players. I had given them to him, and now he wanted to have a look at our form for himself.

And Jack Grey was left out—he was at work.

But he was not left in peace for long.

He had only been poring over his books for five or ten minutes when the door burst open with a crash which was almost sufficient to hurl it off its hinges. And this happened just when Jack was beginning to be resigned, and when he was getting well into his work.

Needless to say, Handforth entered.

He generally entered the study in this fashion. Edward Oswald had utterly no consideration for others. He was the clumsiest fellow in the Remove, in addition to being the most thoughtless.

"Come on!" he said briskly.

Jack looked up, frowning.

"My goodness!" he exclaimed. "I thought an earthquake had happened! What's the idea of bursting in like that, Handy?"

"Practice game is just going to begin," said Handforth. "And you haven't even changed into footer togs yet! Buck up, you ass! You're required on the playing fields."

Jack laid down his pen.

"What a memory you've got, Handy!" he said patiently. "Haven't I told you that I'm not playing football this term? It can't be done, old man. I've got to put in all my time at this kind of work."

Handforth stared.

"Oh, the scholarship!" he exclaimed. "But that's sheer rot! If you think we're going to allow anything of the kind, you've made a bloomer! You needn't get swelled head, but you're one of the best players we've got."

"Thanks!"

"And you're coming out."

"I'm not coming out," said Jack Grey. "Do be sensible, Handy. Buzz off, there's a good chap. Can't you see that I want to be quiet? I'd love to come out this afternoon, but it can't be done."

Handforth snorted.

"What absolute rot!" he said tartly. "In any case, there's no need to miss football. You've got plenty of time for swotting without letting the team down. You can't do it, Grey! It's against all decency!"

Jack looked very uncomfortable.

"I don't like you to put it in that way," he said. "Goodness knows I don't want to let the team down. I've told Nipper all about it, and he agrees that I should be out of the team."

"Oh, Nipper!" said Handforth, with a sniff. "He's skipper, I dare say; but he's too easy going for words. If I was captain I wouldn't allow you to slack off like this. And unless you want a punch on the nose, you'd better look lively and come out!"

Jack looked past Handforth through the

doorway. Church and McClure were standing there, deeming it wiser to be mere spectators.

"Can't you fellows do something?" asked Jack. "Take Handforth away, for goodness' sake! I can't possibly come out this afternoon; I'm too busy. And my time is being wasted now."

"Yes, chuck it, Handy," said Church. "You know that Jack is swotting."

"Rot!" said Handforth. "He ought to have more sense. And as he hasn't got it, I'll take matters into my own hands. Come on, you fathead! Shove these idiotic things aside, and—"

"Leave them alone!" shouted Grey warmly.

Handforth was beginning to throw Jack's books all over the table. Then he seized the junior by the shoulders, and half dragged him to his feet. Jack had kept his temper quite well, under the circumstances, but this was rather too much. Exasperation can reach a point when violence is the only resort.

Biff!

Jack brought his fist round, and Handforth closed his mouth with a snap. Then he let out a fiendish yell. For Jack's fist had caught him on the jaw, and Handforth had bitten his tongue rather more severely than he liked.

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"Yarcooh!" he roared. "You—you silly ass!"

"That's for being so funny!" snapped Jack Grey. "It's a pity if a fellow can't be quiet in his own study without a maniac barging in and creating havoc! Clear out, you dangerous idiot!"

Handforth deliberately pushed back his sleeves.

"Well, I can stand a few things, but this is too much!" he declared. "Come on, you chaps! Lend me a hand! We're going to take this dummy out by force—whether he likes it or not!"

Church and McClure entered the study.

"I say, Handy, don't be silly!" said Church. "Grey doesn't want to come, and if we take him by force we sha'n't do any good. If he doesn't want to play, he won't play. Let's get outside."

Handforth turned, and stared.

"Does that mean that you won't help?" he demanded.

"Well, yes," said Church. "I don't see why we should be dragged into a thing like this. We're not going to help you. Not likely."

"Of course not," agreed McClure. "You can't do things by force, Handy."

"Can't I?" said Handforth. "By George! Can't I? I can jolly well show you chaps what's what, anyhow! You—you traitors! You worms! Take that! And that! I'll show you!"

Handforth hit out right and left.

But Church and McClure knew what to expect, and they dodged with the dexterity of long practice. However, in dodging, Church caught the corner of the table with his back.

The table reared up like a wild thing, and Jack Grey's books and papers were swept into his lap in an avalanche. Incidentally, the inkpot toppled over and poured its contents over the entire collection.

"Look out," howled Grey. "You—you

"By George!" gasped Handforth. "Mutiny! That's what it is—rank mutiny!"

He fairly let himself go. He chased Church and McClure round the study, and paid absolutely no attention to Jack Grey's shouts of protest. The table went flying again, and the havoc increased to such an extent that within a few short seconds, Study E closely resembled a lumber room.

And in the middle of it all, Jack Grey found himself on the floor, with the table on top of him. He was quite buried in the debris, and a collection of juniors had gathered at the door to watch the proceedings.

Church and McClure were in trouble.

It was possible to dodge some of Handforth's blows, but not all of them. And they were just beginning to wonder whether life was really worth living or not, when a sturdy form appeared in the doorway.



"I've bin somebody big in my time," continued the man, "an' I'm still able to knock people down wot won't be reasonable." Mr. Clifford looked at him sharply.

"Well, I'm hanged!"

Mr. Harold Clifford made that remark, and it was quite clear that he was a man of action. He took the whole situation in at the first glance. And it was not necessary for him to look twice to be assured that Edward Oswald Handforth was the ringleader in the trouble.

Mr. Clifford stalked in, and his face was firmly set.

"There's been quite enough of this, young man!" he said sternly. "I think it's about time I took a hand in the game. This way!"

"Why, what—Yow—ow!" yelled Handforth.

"Exactly!" said Mr. Clifford.

He had seized Handforth by the ear, and, gently, but firmly, he led him out through the doorway.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The spectators roared with appreciation. And Handforth roared with pain. There was absolutely no denying Mr. Clifford. Either Handforth went, or his ear went alone. And Jack Grey picked himself up, dusty and breathless, with smears of ink all over him.

"My hat!" he gasped. "That chap ought to be shoved in a padded cell!"

But he wasn't disturbed any more that afternoon!

CHAPTER V.

MAKING PROGRESS!



MR. CROWELL rubbed his hands together with great satisfaction.

"Splendid, my boy—splendid! I am delighted with you. I hardly dared to hope

that you would get on so well."

"Do you think I stand a chance, sir?"

"A very excellent chance, my boy," said the Form master. "I can assure you that you have been making really astonishing progress. Keep it up, Grey—keep it up, and you will be victorious."

Jack Grey's eyes sparkled with encouragement.

"I'd give anything to win the scholarship, sir," he said tensely.

"Keep on in this way, and you will be successful," said Mr. Crowell. "I've no fault to find with your work. Considering the brief time which has elapsed since you commenced your studies, you have already covered yourself with glory."

"It's good of you to say that, sir."

"Not at all," smiled Mr. Crowell. "I know you too well, Grey, to fear that you will suffer from that unfortunate complaint which is known as swelled head. There are many boys whom I would not talk to in this fashion, but it is my endeavour to give you all the encouragement I possibly can."

Two or three days had elapsed, and the master of the Remove was really astonished at the great strides which Jack Grey had made. And the junior returned to Study E feeling considerably bucked—as Archie would have put it. He was getting quite accustomed to hard work by now.

And Jack was leaving nothing to chance.

He studied in every spare moment. He had almost ceased to join the other juniors out in the Triangle, or on the playing fields. Now and again he would snatch half an hour to take a breath of fresh air; but, generally, he was thinking of his work all the time.

Reggie Pitt said very little. He allowed his study mate to continue without any interruptions. In a hundred and one different little ways, Pitt helped his chum. He was full of consideration, he took great care that Jack should be left quiet and undisturbed.

But Jack was so busy, and so engrossed in his work, that he did not fully appreciate these exhibitions of thoughtfulness on Pitt's part. Reggie himself missed Jack's company exceedingly.

And this particular day happened to be another half-holiday; it was, in fact, a Saturday afternoon. And Jack was keenly looking forward to spending two or three solitary hours in Study E.

For, by now, the prospect of studying hard did not worry him. He had almost grown to like it. He was finding an interest

in his work which he had never believed possible.

At the beginning it had scared him—the prospect had been rather an appalling one. But now that he was actually on the job, imaginary difficulties floated away. And Mr. Crowell's words of encouragement made Jack revel in his self-imposed task.

He would win that scholarship or perish in the attempt!

The other juniors had taken it for granted that Jack was quite out of the picture, so far as sports were concerned. I had told all the members of the Junior Eleven that Jack was not to be pressed. When the examinations were over, he would be able to get into practice again, and then take his usual place in the team.

There was no question that Jack Grey's loss was a serious one. He was one of the best footballers in the junior school—a forward who seized every chance to score, and who was an expert at first-time shooting.

Our wings were well provided for. Reggie Pitt himself was a tower of strength—being, in fact, far more skilful than any member of the Senior Eleven. I generally led the forward-line in our big matches. But it was a very difficult problem to find an inside man capable of taking Jack's place in the field.

At present I had been giving Turner, of the College House, a good trial, as he had displayed some excellent form in House matches. But Turner did not possess Jack's lightning-like decision. Many an opening was presented to him, and he failed to take advantage of it, whereas Jack Grey, in the same position, would have slammed the leather into the net in a flash.

Jack did not know much about this, for he studiously avoided the subject of football. He didn't want to hear about the game at all, fearing that it would weaken his determination. For he was passionately fond of the great winter game, and only he knew what a great wrench it was to give it up.

Pitt came into Study E, whistling cheerily.

He was dressed in football attire, and he was swinging his boots in his hand. He gave Jack a nod, and proceeded to don the boots. Jack laid his book aside, and regarded Pitt rather enviously.

"It's no good—I can't fool myself," he said. "I'd just love to be playing this afternoon, Reggie. We're against the River House, aren't we?"

Pitt grinned.

"My dear chap, you're getting rusty," he said cheerfully. "We played the River House a day or two ago. No, we're up against Helmford this afternoon. It'll be a stiff battle, too. Barlowe's got hold of some new forwards this term, and they're mustard, by all I can hear."

"Well, I wish you luck," said Jack.

"Thanks! I expect we shall pull it off —"

The door opened, and Bob Christine looked in.

"Hallo! What do you want?" asked Pitt. "You're not allowed over this side, you know—"

"Dry up! It's pax to-day," said Christine. "No house rows when there's an important match on hand, my son. I was just wondering if Grey could spare enough time to play this afternoon."

Jack shook his head.

"Sorry, but I'm right up to the eyes," he said. "You know I'd love to play, but it can't be did. Besides, I'm right out of practice."

"Out of practice or not, you'd be a lot better than Freeman," said Christine. "He's one of our chaps, but I haven't got any particular confidence in him as an inside man."

"I thought Turner was playing in Grey's place?" asked Pitt.

"So he was, but the silly ass caught a cold yesterday," said Christine. "He's unfit to-day—old Stockdale wouldn't let him turn out. These House masters are a bit unreasonable, you know."

"Freeman!" said Pitt. "Couldn't Nipper find a better forward than him?"

"I don't think so—we're short of forwards," said Christine. "We can find plenty of backs, and half-backs, but our reserve forwards are of a pretty poor quality. I say, Grey, can't you come to the rescue for once?"

Jack looked uncomfortable.

"You know I'd do it like a shot if I could," he said. "But if I once give way I shall probably lose my determination. Don't tempt me, for goodness' sake. I was just getting resigned."

"Yes, it's a bit too bad to press him," put in Pitt. "In fact, it's not fair at all. We shall manage all right, Jack, don't worry. Come on, Bob—we'll clear out."

"Oh, all right," said Christine. "But it's a terrific pity. Only two hours, you know. Surely he could make up the time afterwards."

They passed out, and Jack heard no more of the conversation. For some little time he sat at the table, engaged in a little tussle with himself. Only two hours! Why shouldn't he do it? He could work harder in the evening—

But he shook his head, and grabbed up a pen.

"No, it's no good!" he muttered fiercely. "It's not only the time—it's everything! If I start football again, I shall want to go on with it. Then I shall slack off, and get stale. No, I've got to go on—I've got to win that scholarship!"

And, having dismissed football by a great effort, he settled himself down to work. He got completely immersed in his subject, and it seemed only about half an hour before Pitt came in again. It was the first interruption since the early afternoon. And Jack was rather astonished to notice that the daylight was fading.

"Half-time?" he asked, pushing his books away.

"My dear chap, the match is over," said Pitt, as he poked up the fire, and put some coal on. "Been getting on all right?"

"Rather—I'd no idea the time had passed like this."

"Good!"

There was a short pause.

"Who won?" asked Jack, at length.

"Helmford won—three-two."

"I say, that's pretty rotten!" said Jack, with concern. "On our own ground, too! What a pity!"

"Freeman was a washout," said Pitt. "I don't want to boast, but I gave him some beautiful openings in the second half. Twice he ballooned the ball into the sky—and then, when he had an absolutely open goal in front of him, he missed the ball altogether. Think of it! He kicked, and missed! Of course, one of the Helmford backs swept up, and cleared."

"Hard lines," said Jack. "I hope you didn't lose because of me."

Pitt shrugged his shoulders.

"Well, there's no sense in telling lies," he replied. "If you had played instead of Freeman we should have got about six goals. Nipper scored the two we did manage to collect, but it wasn't supported."

"How rotten!" exclaimed Jack, with real concern. "I say, I'd no idea that my absence from the team would make any difference. I'm beastly uncomfortable. I feel that I'm letting the side down."

Pitt slapped him on the back.

"Don't be an ass," he said cheerfully. "After all, it's all in the game—we shall get our revenge, never fear. I was a thoughtless ass to mention the matter at all. What about some tea?"

"Good idea!" exclaimed Jack. "I've had enough work for a bit."

But as he was helping to get tea ready, he could not help feeling that his efforts to win the Lytton Trust Scholarship were being made at a big cost.

CHAPTER VI.

WHAT FULLWOOD SAW.



FULLWOOD stirred his tea thoughtfully.

"I don't like that new man, Clifford," he remarked. "He's too blessed inquisitive for me."

"Inquisitive?" asked Bell.

"Yes, rather."

The Nuts of the Ancient House were having tea in Study A. And Ralph Leslie Fullwood was not looking particularly amiable as he brought up the subject of Mr. Clifford. Gulliver nodded as he helped himself to a pastry.

"You're about right, old man," he said. "I can't say that I've taken much of a likin' to the fellow. Only this mornin' he stopped me in the Triangle an' asked me

why I was breathin' so hard. Said that my wind ought to be better."

"The nerve!" said Bell.

"That's just what I've got to complain of," went on Fullwood. "I met him in the gymnasium just after breakfast this mornin'. What did he do? He thumped me in the chest, an' said that I was out of condition."

"He's too jolly big for his boots!" exclaimed Bell.

"Of course he is," agreed Fullwood. "I should like to know what the dickens we want a sports master for. Besides, he seems to think that he can order us about as he likes. He actually told me that I've got to show up in the gym every mornin' for fifteen minutes exercise."

"Ignore him!" said Gulliver.

"That's all very well—but if I ignore him, he'll probably report me to Mr. Lee," growled Fullwood. "I'm blessed if I know what things are comin' to nowadays! We ain't allowed to live as we like."

Bell grinned.

"Well, as a matter of fact, you are a bit out of condition, Fully," he observed. "I've noticed it myself. You haven't got a healthy complexion, for one thing. I'll bet you smoked too many cigs. during the vac."

Fullwood scowled.

"That's just what Clifford had the nerve to say!" he grunted. "How the dickens does he know that I smoke? The blessed rotter! I absolutely detest him! He thinks he knows a lot about boxin'! I'll bet any Remove chap could knock him cold!"

Gulliver looked thoughtful.

"I'm not so sure about that," he said. "Clifford's got some pretty good shoulders, an' he looks a lively customer. The best thing we can do is to keep on his right side. We don't want to fall foul with a chap who can box like a professional."

"Rot!" said Fullwood. "He can't box! These sports masters are all the same. They think they know everything about football and wrestling and boxing, an' squash racquets—an' yet they know practically nothin'. It makes me sick! An' we've got to take orders from him!"

It was quite evident that Mr. Harold Clifford was not a popular person with the chums of Study A. The juniors continued the discussion while they finished their tea.

And they came to the unanimous conclusion that Mr. Clifford was a wind-bag, and that he knew about as much on the subject of boxing as the average Third Former. Exactly why Fullwood and Co. should come to this conclusion was something of a mystery, for they had had no opportunity, so far, of judging Mr. Clifford fairly.

But the Nuts were bitter against him—mainly because he was a decent sort—and it pleased them to disparage him. As it happened, an opportunity was destined to occur almost at once—when Fullwood, at least, would be able to see something which would change his opinion.

Fullwood, having finished tea, sallied

across to the College House to have a short interview with Grayson and Shaw, of the Fifth. These two seniors happened to be rather flush of money, and Fullwood knew it. His object in seeking them out was to arrange a little card party.

He arranged it all right. The Fifth Formers agreed to a little game later on, after prep. And Fullwood, feeling satisfied, passed out into the Triangle again on his way over to the Ancient House.

It was nearly dark.

Scarcely a soul was about, and a cold, cutting wind was whistling down from the North. Fullwood frowned instinctively as he noticed a stalwart figure entering the gateway.

Mr. Clifford was just coming in. And at the same moment another figure appeared—a shuffling, unkempt man, who hurried through the gateway into the Triangle.

"Just a minute, guv'nor!" he exclaimed huskily.

Mr. Clifford paused, and half turned.

"Well, what do you want?" he inquired.

"Spare a copper for a poor bloke wot's starvin', sir!" exclaimed the other, in a hoarse voice. "I ain't 'ad work for weeks. I've got a wife an' a couple of kids at 'ome, sir—"

"Quite so!" interrupted Mr. Clifford. "I'm sorry, my man, but I don't happen to have any change on me at the moment—and I'm not sure that I would give you anything if I had. You'd better get on your way."

"Mean beast!" muttered Fullwood contemptuously.

He had paused just under the old chestnut trees, and was looking on—quite unknown to Mr. Clifford. The Triangle was otherwise quite deserted. Fullwood was probably the only fellow who knew what was taking place.

"You heard what I said?" exclaimed the sports master sharply.

He was not mean, as Fullwood had surmised. As a matter of fact, Mr. Clifford's nature was quite the opposite. But he was a keen judge of character, and one glance at this tramp was sufficient for him.

The man was obviously a ruffian. He was unkempt, unshaven, reeking with filth and the foul fumes of stale tobacco and beer. His very face was that of a bruiser—a low rascal who was probably too lazy to do any honest work.

Mr. Clifford would have helped any deserving case—but he saw no earthly reason why he should give this man money to spend on beer. Besides, as he had said, he had no loose change.

"Don't be 'ard on a chap—guv'nor," pleaded the man in a whining voice, as he clutched at Mr. Clifford's sleeve. "Eight weeks I've bin without work—an' can't find none! Me, wot used to be famous in the boxin' ring. Yes, you might not think so, but I've bin somebody big in me time—an'

(Continued on page 15.)

EVERY WEEK—TWO GRAND COMPLETE DETECTIVE STORIES!



CONTAINS TWO OF THE VERY BEST COMPLETE DETECTIVE STORIES.

OUR DETECTIVE STORY SECTION

No. 5. PRESENTED WITH "THE NELSON LEE LIBRARY." Jan. 6, 1923



A Real Life Detective Adventure of Scotland Yard's C.I.D. Men.

IT was all done very nicely and politely, but the Brigade de Sûreté left no doubt of its opinion of Mulberry Street, and Mulberry Street, justly hurt, neatly paraphrased into smooth official terms the retort that the whole of the French detective service was not worth a hill of beans.

Now this regrettable interchange of amenities between two great criminal investigation bureaux could not have arisen had they not both been a little strained by outside influences. It was a little matter of forgery. There had been an import of forged French notes of exquisite workmanship, and the Brigade de Sûreté had convinced themselves that the point of origination was in the United States. Mulberry Street was approached in form to "see to it."

It so happened that Mulberry Street was very busy. It pointed out to its French confrère that New York was a big place, and the United States a bigger. Wouldn't it be as well for the Brigade de Sûreté to catch the swindlers who were actually passing the notes? The Brigade de Sûreté replied that this had been attempted—vainly. "The matter shall have our attention," said Mulberry Street, and detailed two men who, for a time, made things extremely uncomfortable for persons who might reasonably

be supposed to have leanings towards syndicated crime.

The Chef de Sûreté, stirred thereto by reports that notes were still being negotiated, and longing for some one to kick, dictated the note already referred to, and the Assistant Commissioner of New York's police, also pleased to kick, made his reply. So a stimulant to efforts on both sides of the Atlantic was afforded.

Then it was that Grenfell of New Scotland Yard, London, who had been sent over to arrange the extradition of an embezzler, happened into Mulberry Street, and to him as an unprejudiced and sympathetic outsider many people opened their souls.

The kick administered by the Brigade de Sûreté had been passed on after due reflection to Detective-Sergeant McFall, who, pining for a kind word, met Grenfell as he was coming down the steps from the Assistant Commissioner's office.

"Hello, you?" he exclaimed, thrusting out a heavy fist. "How'd you find the boss? Did y' mention forgery to him?"

"No. He did all the mentioning," said Grenfell.

McFall fell into step with him and spat viciously. "He'll be an ice-box to the chief when he gets going," he said, with a touch

of admiration. "He had Gann and me up this morning, and you may have noticed the scorch marks on the carpet where he frizzled us. Yes, we were burnt-offerings all right by the time he was through. He told you that some one was handing out bad paper in France, I suppose?"

Grenfell slapped him on the back. "Come and have a tonic," he said.

They had a tonic. They had two. And on the second McFall spoke more freely. He was feeling bitter because he had been unjustly blamed. He was an able man, and it was because of his ability that he had been one of the two selected to unearth the forgers. "'Tisn't as if we had anything to work on," he declared. "We've had a line on every crook in little old New York, and we've pulled down a dozen if we've pulled one. The stuff goes over by mail, but we've kept our eye on the letters sent out by every likely bird. None of the boys is in it—that I'll swear."

"How do you know they go out by mail?" asked Grenfell.

McFall lifted his shoulders. "Same way as the French people know the stuff comes from here. There was a package at Rennes—R. J. Tupper, Poste Restante—New York postmark—type-written address—fifty one-hundred-franc notes inside and nothing else. No one ever called for them, and they were handed over to the police. That's how. Now"—he smashed a fist down on the counter—"the chief, he says, 'I want you to find out who's marketing the dope, and to find out quick.' And because I can't work miracles I get it in the neck—some," he concluded bitterly.

The Central Detective Bureau of New York is a wonderfully efficient body, and it expects its men to be efficient. It does not like excuses. Like all police bodies it has a keen esprit de corps. It considers itself without peer in the wide, wide world—again like every detective organisation that ever existed. Grenfell could understand. If it had been merely a matter of internal crime, McFall's failure would not have mattered. No detective outside fiction can work miracles. This, however, was an international matter—a question, in a sense, of rivalry.

"Hard lines, old son," consoled Grenfell. "Cheer up, there's worse troubles at sea. Get a week's leave and come with me fishing somewhere. I've got to hang about for that time before my extradition case comes on again."

"I wish I could," said McFall dolefully. "I wish I could. I can see the boss's face if I asked for leave just now. No, I've got to keep busy."

Detective-Inspector Grenfell made his fishing excursion alone. The place he selected was a flourishing little seaside town, which as yet had scarcely realised that it had the making of a "resort." He gave his holiday feeling full bent. London was many hundred

miles away; the whole of it might be blown up, the Crown jewels stolen, the Cabinet assassinated—and he could not be recalled. His mission was almost automatic. There was nothing on earth that could prevent him throwing off the cares of his profession and forgetting that such a place as Scotland Yard existed.

It is as such self-congratulatory moments as this that fate loves to interfere—fate in this instance in the shape of a sportive puppy dog, of no particular pedigree, and a woman's hand-bag.

Grenfell had noticed the young woman, an oval-featured, fair-haired girl in white, as he strolled on the beach. She was reclining in a deck-chair, sunning herself, the hand with the bag listlessly dangling. The puppy arrived at a gallop, and in the next few moments was a hundred yards along the shore, growling ferociously as he strove to tear his knot to pieces.

The detective and the dog's owner raced to the rescue, but it was the latter who retrieved the hand-bag, now chewed to almost unrecognisable pulp, and returned it to its owner. Grenfell slackened his pace, and the breeze blew a scrap of paper to his feet—a relic of the ruin the puppy had wrought. He stooped, picked it up, and mechanically crumpled it in his hand to throw away again. Then something about the pellet he had fashioned caught his attention. He straightened it out and examined it and looked round for the girl. She had vanished.

"May I be hanged!" exclaimed Grenfell, and with long, quick strides, returned to his hotel and wrote a short letter, in which he enclosed the scrap of paper.

Thus far he was only acting with the courtesy of the man who, having stumbled across a piece of information, passes it on to the one more immediately concerned. But morning brought with it a wire from McFall which might have seemed incoherent to any but a student of Kipling.

"The bleating of the lamb excites the tiger. Ten thousand dollars reward now offered. Coming first train.—McFALL."

By eleven o'clock the burly Central Office man had reached the English detective. He was chuckling with glee. The despondency of the previous meeting was all gone. "We're on to it, old fellow!" he cried. "You lucky dog! That was the corner of a five-thousand-franc note that you got hold of, and it's turned out by a workman. Some folks are born lucky. I've been sweetering for weeks to get a line on the case, and you, without any interest in it, come over, and an end falls in your lap. Where's the lady?"

The Englishman shook his head. "Never saw the going of her, Mac. To tell the truth, I haven't worried much about it. I thought I'd give you a tip. Now it's your funeral."

McFall's lower jaw dropped and he whirled

furiously on his friend. "None of that," he snarled. "I ain't accepting no presents, and don't you forget it. There's ten thousand dollars that the French banks are offering hanging to this case, my son, and you'll dip your fingers in it, or I'll know why. You can't shunt out of it. Now, will you be good?"

"I'll be good," smiled Grenfell. "Where do we stand?"

McFall became serious. He unlocked his suit-case and took out a dozen photographs. "I brought these on the off-chance," he explained. "There's no one in the gallery that answers your description, but I guess these are all the young women likely to be in a big job."

Although he had had only a few moments' view of the girl on the beach, Grenfell was a trained observer, and what he remembered of her features he remembered accurately. He shook his head over the photographs. "She's not here."

"May be a raw hand," he reflected.

"She may be," agreed McFall; "but it's no beginner who is turning out the dope. See here, Grenfell, this show isn't being run single-handed. It needs appliances and skill to run a show like this. A pickpocket or a burglar can shift around as he wants to. A forger wants definite headquarters. He's got to be fixed somewhere. Now, I don't admire this town for a residence, but if I were turning out phony paper I wouldn't ask for a better place. It's out of the way, and it's handy to New York—what?"

"That's so," agreed Grenfell. "How do you propose to locate them? I'm in your hands."

McFall wiped the perspiration from his broad forehead. "We'll get them," he declared. "We'll get them if we have to go through the State with a fine tooth comb. Gaun and Wills are coming this afternoon. Meanwhile we might go and have a chat with the chief of police here. We might want his help yet."

If Grenfell had not had some knowledge of the free-and-easy ways of the American police he might have been a little astonished to meet an important functionary on duty in his shirt-sleeves, with his chair tilted back, his heels on his desk, and a cigar between his teeth. The chief paid them the compliment of bringing his feet to the floor and passing the cigar box.

He readily promised his assistance in searching the district, but scratched his head with a penholder as Grenfell described the girl. She could, he declared, be duplicated fifty times in the town. "Might be anyone," he added, a fact which the two detectives had reached for themselves long before. And then the door opened wide enough to admit a head and shoulders, and Grenfell found himself looking into the face of a girl—the girl.

He half rose from his seat and then sank back again. "I beg your pardon," she said hastily. "I am looking for father, Mr.

Burchnell. I thought he might be with you." She withdrew her head, and the door closed with a click.

"Our mayor's daughter," said the chief. "Isn't she a peach?"

Grenfell was doing some quick thinking. A more impulsive or less ready man might have blurted out something. But it had flashed across him that the mayor of an American city holds a considerable influence in police matters—extending to the appointment of even chiefs of police—and he had no wish to be laughed at. Even in a land where politics is a profession, the daughter of a high municipal official is unlikely to be concerned in a syndicated crime.

The point, however, was gained that the girl was known. That, nevertheless, was far from simplifying the problem. In view of her position it was extremely unlikely that she had anything to do with a gang of forgers. On the other hand, why on earth should she have been carrying a forged French bank-note of high denomination?

"Mac," he said, when they got outside, "the local police can't help us."

"Never expected much," agreed McFall. "Still, it's as well to get 'em interested."

"I don't mean that. I've found the woman."

McFall was quick in the uptake. "The mayor's daughter?" he inquired. And as Grenfell nodded, he gave a long, low whistle.

Now that a scent had been defined, McFall took the lead. He was a busy man for a couple of hours, though his labours were more real than apparent. He lounged through the little town, visited the barber, and chatted as an inquisitive stranger on local affairs while he was being shaved. He also displayed the little shield under the lapel of his jacket to a big policeman, swinging his stick by the loop on a side-walk, and the policeman, flattered by the attention of the sleuth from New York, also talked.

So did the editor of the local newspaper to whom McFall introduced himself. None of these persons was aware that he was affording anything more than idle conversation.

Yet McFall, when he returned to his friend at the hotel, had a budget of information. He dropped into a lounge wearily. "That kid's name's Prudence Fastlet," he said. "Playing the popularity game with a big 'P' for her old man. He's been here for seven years, and mayor three, and I guess wants to keep on the Dick Whittington act. Retired theatre manager from Columbus, Ohio. The villagers swear by him. Can't see any fun in being mayor of a show like this myself."

Grenfell mentioned a word. The other man rubbed a shiny cheek with his knuckles. "Nope! He ain't grafting, and that's the funny part of it. He's straight. Working the popularity racket for all he's worth—father of the city, and all that sort of thing. Where does he come in?"

"Girl engaged?"

"No. Say, Gann and Wills are about due. I'll have a quick lunch and get a smart boy to slip 'em a note at the depot. We don't want to know 'em if we see 'em." The eyelid nearest to Grenfell closed and opened again quickly. "The police chief here is sweet on the kid—see?"

"I see," said Grenfell. He had gathered McFall's idea. Burchnall would probably mention their visit either to the girl or her father, and the news of their presence in the town would certainly spread. It might be as well than any attention should be concentrated on them.

Within an hour, two commercial travellers had arrived in town and registered themselves at an hotel. The two detectives, lounging in deck-chairs on the veranda, paid them not the slightest attention. In about half an hour they emerged again, and Grenfell rose lazily. "Think I'll go for a stroll," he said, and McFall grunted an indifferent assent.

Grenfell's sauntering took him by the mayor's house on the front, and curiously enough, the two commercial travellers strolled at much about the same pace in the same direction, but fifty yards behind. The Scotland Yard man dropped on a patch of grass, and extracting a magazine from his pocket began to read. His face was in the direction of the house. Fifty yards away the commercial travellers also sat down. One of them found a piece of rock, which he stuck up on end, and the pair amused themselves by shying pebbles at it.

Half an hour or more elapsed. Then from the house there emerged a figure in white. Grenfell took off his hat and fanned himself. A glance sideways showed him one of the commercial travellers fumbling with a foot-lace. He finished, and the pair strode away in the direction of the girl.

"That's all right," muttered Grenfell to himself. "They'll hang on to her now till all's blue." He knew the competence of the Central Office men, and renewed his story with an eye on the white-painted house. He registered in his mind all the comings and goings of visitors during the afternoon, but that may have been merely a matter of habit. He had not intended to watch the house after he had pointed out Miss Fastlet to her shadowers. Indeed, though McFall insisted that he should share the reward if the forgers were run to earth, the case was no concern of his. He had no official standing in the United States, and he doubted if he could even legally effect an arrest.

But he hated the feeling of being a spectator, and presently he closed his magazine. There was no one in sight, no sign of life about the white house. The temptation overcame him. Rapidly he took a survey, decided the servants' quarters were probably located in the east wing, opened the gate, and moved into the shrubbery. It was in discreet. It was probably criminal. But the lust of a chase was in his blood, and he coolly took his risks. He wanted to know

more about the inside of the house, and this seemed an opportunity.

Fortune favoured him, for he found an open window on the ground floor which led into a small sitting-room. He moved quietly and quickly across it and into the passage. He wanted to waste no time in his investigation.

The ground-floor rooms were of a perfectly innocent character, though Grenfell raised his eyebrows at what he recognised must be expensive furnishings. For a retired theatrical manager and a mayor who did no grafting, Fastlet certainly had ideas of comfort.

Once Grenfell slipped behind a portière, and a servant brushed past him almost within an inch. He waited perfectly still for five minutes and then resumed his survey. If there had been nothing suspicious downstairs there was still less upstairs. He pushed his head in bedroom after bedroom, and the feeling that he was making a fool of himself became more convincing every moment.

There was one room, entered through a sort of sitting-room. The door refused to give as he twisted the handle. He swore softly to himself. "I might have known!" he exclaimed. "Bound to be locked."

He remained standing in thought for a moment or so and then tried to peer through the keyhole. A flap on the other side defeated him. He sniffed inquiringly. Then he straightened himself up and found himself looking down the muzzle of a shot-gun.

"Make yourself at home," invited the man at the other end of the gun. "Don't mind me." He was a tall, awkward man of fifty or thereabouts, square-faced, clean-shaven, with thin grey hair, and a mouth like a rat-trap. He wore a light lounge suit, and the noiselessness of his approach was accounted for by the fact that he was in woolen slippers.

Grenfell stood stock still. He knew that it would be difficult to miss with a shot-gun at three yards. Had the weapon been a pistol he might have chanced a dash. He was wise enough to recognise that that was out of the question.

"Mr. Fastlet, I presume," he said politely. He was in a tight place, and he knew it. There was nothing to be gained by losing his head.

"That's me," agreed the other grimly. "Don't you be too fresh, Mr. Man, and keep your hands away from your pockets. That's better." He walked across the room, selected an arm-chair, and sat down, the gun still trained on Grenfell. It ran swiftly across the mind of the detective that an ordinary householder who had surprised a burglar would have summoned help. "You can sit down if you like," said Fastlet. "Only move smoothly, because my nerves are rather out of order. I'd just hate to have a corpse on my hands."

Grenfell leaned against the wall. "I'd rather stand, thanks," he said languidly.

OUR DETECTIVE STORY SECTION

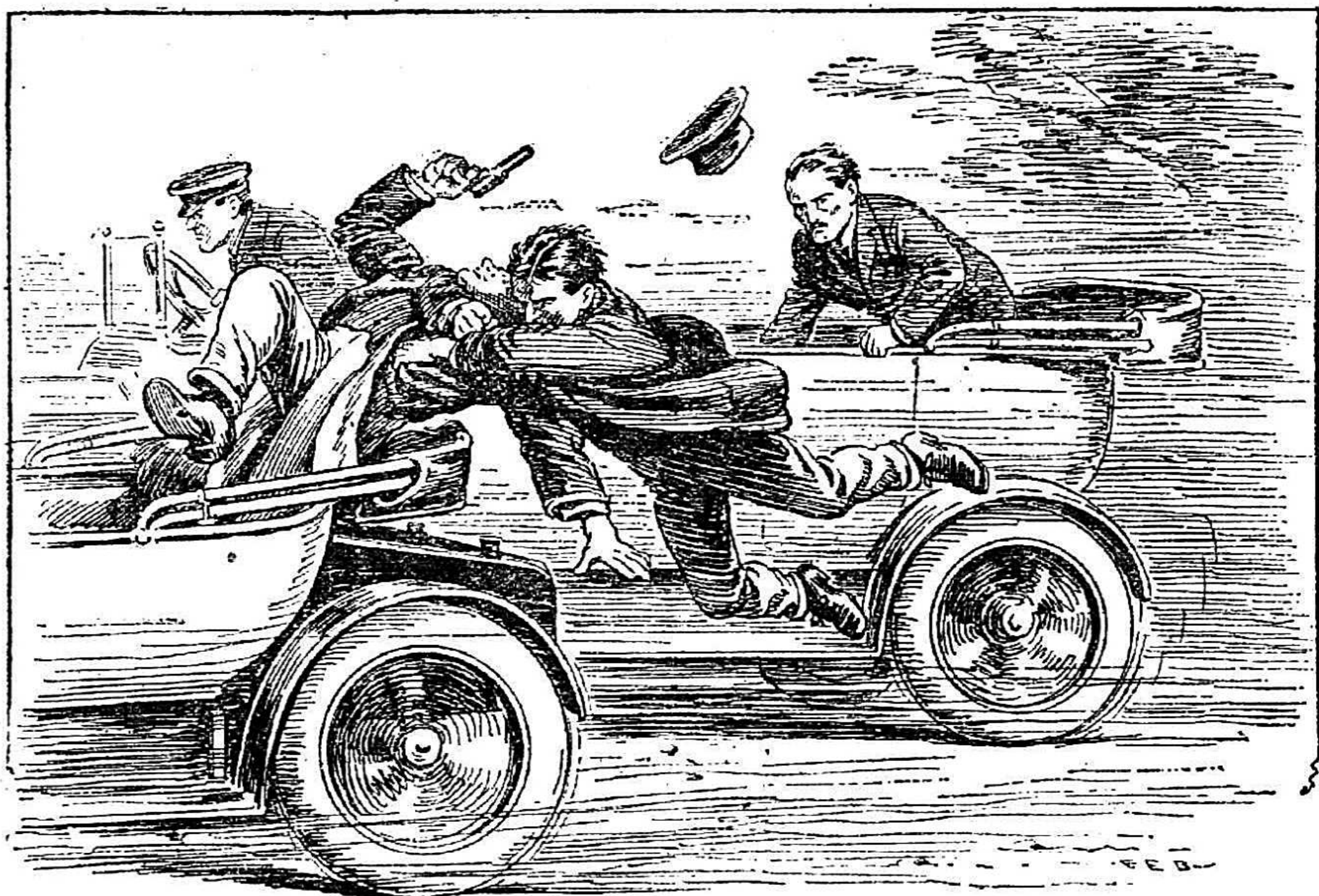
"That's all right," agreed the other, "so long as you don't try any monkey tricks. Well, what do you think you're going to do about it?"

"It's up to you," pointed out Grenfell. He was philosopher enough to accept things as they happened, and he judged that if he was in a dilemma his captor was no less so.

Fastlet studied him silently for a minute or so. "So it's up to me," he repeated slowly. "You know that a man is justified in shooting a burglar whom he finds searching his house. Any jury would call that justifiable homicide." He raised the gun

broke into a thunderous roar of laughter as he extended a hand. "Well, I'm jiggered. The joke's on you this time. Burchnall told me that you and McFall were here, but I didn't expect to catch you burgling my house. D'you think I'm a forger? Ha, ha! That's good. What the dickens are you doing, anyway?"

It was a question that was difficult to answer. Grenfell had no excuse, no explanation to offer. If he had held any authority he might possibly have taken action. He really believed that Fastlet would have murdered him had he not bluffed about McFall. There was only one course for him to adopt.



Then Grenfell's strong, wiry arms were around Fastlet, and he dragged him down backwards.

and glanced along the barrels. Grenfell read murder in his eyes.

He shrugged his shoulders.

"I don't think you'll do that, Mr. Fastlet," he said. "I wouldn't, if I were you. You see, there is a Central Office man staying in the town, and he knows where I am. If I'm any judge, he'll stir around pretty soon, and a dead body won't be easy for you to explain away."

The mayor's face was expressionless as he lowered the gun. "And who in Hades are you?" he demanded doubtfully.

"My name is Grenfell, detective-inspector of the Criminal Investigation Department, New Scotland Yard."

Fastlet dropped the gun and, standing up,

He smiled blandly into the mayor's face.

"Come and have dinner with me to-night," he said, "and I'll put you wise to the whole thing. As you say, the joke's on me. Now let me hurry away, there's a good man, or McFall will be making trouble. See you later."

Grenfell had run his hardest for ten minutes before he found a very fat and very dignified policeman. He seized that official's sleeve and dragged him along for a dozen yards in his headlong career. "Get on to the fire-brigade," he said breathlessly. "Turn 'em out to the mayor's house. Don't ask questions. Get busy."

The intelligent officer gave a guttural and indistinct sound which Grenfell took for

assent, and his sleeve now released, plodded at a slower but no less breathless pace in the wake of the detective.

Grenfell raced into the hotel, threw an inquiry and an order at the clerk in the hall in the same breath, and found McFall at the telephone, with Wills at his elbow. His hand fell on the sergeant's shoulder, and he tore him away in the middle of a sentence.

"Come on," he urged. "There's no time to waste. I've ordered a car."

A bell clanged noisily, and a motor fire-engine raced by in the street below. Grenfell was too out of breath for lengthy explanations but, luckily, the Central Office men were people of action.

"Garage end of first block on the right," said the clerk as they dashed once more into the hall. "I've phoned 'em to get their best car ready."

Nevertheless there was a wait of a few moments at the garage. Grenfell, in short, staccato sentences, jerked out some of the conclusions he had arrived at. "Yes. We've got to be quick if that's the case," said McFall. "We'll drop Wills at the house." The car was ready by this time, and they jumped aboard. "Now cut loose for all she's worth," ordered McFall.

It had taken Grenfell a quarter of an hour to get from the mayor's house to the hotel. It took the car barely three minutes to cover the distance. A small crowd was gathered about the gates, and a thin, almost undiscernible wreath of vapour was circling from a window. The firemen had a hose out, and even in the roadway they could hear the smashing of axes on woodwork.

Wills jumped to the ground as the car slackened pace, and ran forward. They could see him making eager inquiries, and presently he came running back. "Been gone ten minutes!" he shouted. "Car a little old-fashioned green-painted two-seater. You'll pick him up easy."

The chauffeur pressed over a lever and the car slid smoothly forward. McFall took from his pocket a 44-automatic, took out a clip of cartridges, and pushed it back again. "You got a gun?" he asked.

Grenfell shook his head.

"You never know," said McFall, dropping the weapon in his jacket pocket and fixing his eyes ahead on the blinding white road as it whirled towards them. Twice they slackened speed to make inquiries. It was on the second occasion that they learned the green-painted car was but a mile ahead of them, and a few minutes later a little cloud of dust in front showed that they were rapidly overhauling their quarry.

"Keep straight on," McFall advised the chauffeur. "We'll run ahead of them and hold them up."

In a little they were near enough to see a face peering over the back of the leading car. "Look out," cried Grenfell, and dropped without shame into the bottom of the car. The glass wind-screen shattered,

and they could hear the shriek of a bullet as it tore overhead.

McFall was holding the barrel of his automatic balanced on the palm of his left hand. The thud of his answering shot was almost simultaneous. But a fragment of glass from the broken wind-screen had caught their chauffeur on the cheek. The car swerved, righted again, and then the brakes were on.

"I'm done," said the chauffeur. "He's got me."

McFall swore. Grenfell was making a hasty examination of the man. "You're all right," he told him. "That's only a bit of glass. That won't hurt you."

The chauffeur looked relieved. "Get on," ordered McFall. "Let her loose."

"Not me," said the man doggedly. "This car isn't hired for gun-play. Count me out."

It was no moment to waste time in argument. McFall stuck the muzzle of his weapon against the back of the chauffeur's neck. "Get on with it," he ordered curtly.

Sullenly the chauffeur started up again. It was a choice of evils, but the man in front might miss if he started shooting again; the detective certainly would not.

In a matter of five minutes they were again within fifty yards of the green car. McFall commenced to fire. He was taking no chances. Once only was a shot returned, and as they drew nearer, Grenfell, who was peering over the top of the seat, perceived the reason. Fastlet's chauffeur had also needed persuading with a pistol. He laughed as the situation became clear to him.

"Make him slack up as we come alongside the other car," he told McFall. "I'm going to jump for it."

McFall nodded. The Scotland Yard man braced himself for a leap. Inch by inch they drew nearer the other car, and Fastlet, facing around, fired twice. Both shots went wide.

Then Grenfell jumped. He heard the wooden thud of McFall's automatic again, and as he landed his face was scorched by the explosion of the mayor's pistol. Then his strong, wiry arms were around Fastlet, and he dragged him down backwards. Both cars slid to a halt just as the two struggling men fell heavily to the ground.

The mayor was a powerful man, but he had been taken at a disadvantage. Moreover, Grenfell was as physically fit as it is possible for a man of forty to be. By the time McFall had come running to his assistance he had the mayor pinned. The Central Office man put away his weapon and dragged out a shiny pair of self-adjusting, nickel-plated handcuffs, which he clipped round the prisoner's wrists.

"Now we're all hunky," he said, and they assisted the prisoner to rise.

"This is you," said Fastlet, glaring menacingly at Grenfell. "If you hadn't been so darned quick—". He checked himself. "What's the charge, anyway? You've got nothing you can bring against me. This means an action for damages."

"Cut out the bluff," said McFall sharply.

"You'll be held for forgery, and that's all there is to it. Let's get aboard."

Far away, back in the Central Office records, long before the days of finger-prints, McFall came across the portrait of a young man. He pointed it out to Grenfell. "That finishes it. Here he is 'way back in the nineties. Soapy Smith he is—he was in the green goods trade at one time—but he's an expert forger. Got ten years in ninety-two, and has dropped out of sight since."

"Let it alone," growled Willis. "Grenfell's going to tell us how he got on to the old man—not but what we've got him anyway," he added, with a touch of esprit de corps. "Once we nailed the girl it was plain enough."

"I was lucky," admitted Grenfell modestly. "You people have been too long in the game not to know that luck counts a lot. But I'd have been nowhere without your backing. I couldn't have told for sure on my own that that piece of paper I picked up on the beach was from a forged note without your experts behind me. Still, that was luck to start with. Then, when McFall here, found out that the mayor was no grafter, we both got to thinking on the same lines."

"That's right," agreed McFall. "A man who's all for purity in municipal affairs, and lives in the way he did, has got a reason, you bet."

"Yes. Soapy must have had it all worked out when he went into politics. If the French police hadn't tumbled that the stuff was drifting in from the States he might have kept on for ever. Who was going to get suspicious of the high-souled mayor of a seaside town? Besides, he had the local police in his pocket, though I suppose they knew nothing of what he was doing. He kept clear of political graft because he didn't want Pinkerton's or any outside people called in by a purity committee. Then he was handy to New York."

"I figured this out while I was waiting to put you on to the girl. I gave McFall credit for having the same line. But I wanted to get the thing done with quickly, and it didn't seem to me likely to work out in a hurry on soft lines. That was how it came into my head to break into the house on the off-chance of picking up something. I'd have waited to put you boys up to it, but after all, only one man could go in. There wasn't anything to be gained by sharing the risk among four."

"I'll own freely it looked as if I was on a dead end till I got upstairs. There was a room there—a sort of study—with another room leading out of it. The door of the second room was locked, but I got a kind of mixed smell of chemicals. I knew then that I was right, and that I had happened on the private laboratory. It was then that the old man happened on me with a shotgun."

"He knew who I was—he'd been talking to Burchnell—and, at first, I looked like

qualifying for a funeral. I bluffed that McFall was lying in wait, and we called a truce. We shook hands, and I came away."

"It was pretty obvious he wasn't going to sit around once he'd got me out of the house, and if he made a get-away he would not want to leave any evidence behind him either. That was how I came to think of a fire call."

"Lucky you did," observed Willis. "The firemen had just broken into the laboratory when I got there. He'd simply piled the place with junk, emptied a can of kerosene over it, chucked in a match, and locked the door again. We saved enough out of the ruins to get hold of the whereabouts of their crooks in France. We've cabled the address over. He was supplying them with phony paper at fifty per cent. discount."

"You haven't told me about the girl," said Grenfell. "What's happened to her?"

"She's safe enough," said Gann. "The old man seems to have got disturbed when he heard that McFall and you were on the warpath. He is a wary bird, and had no dealings direct with those who were handling the paper. He had a little cigar store in the Bronx, under the name of George James, with a manager in charge. The manager had no knowledge of anything wrong—he didn't even know where his employer lived. Soapy never came to the town himself. He always sent the girl, and she collected letters off the manager, and posted every mail that was to go out. Well, as I say, he smelt something and sent her off to New York to destroy any mail she found there; I pulled her actually in the store. She's his daughter, but I think she'll clear herself. He didn't trust even her. She never knew what was in the letters coming or going. By the way, she had in her bag the rest of the fragments of the note. It was a sample, included in a letter to a crook named Wilson."

McFall yawned and stretched himself. "The chief's so pleased he'll eat out of your hand. Say, it's getting near hungry time. I put it to the meeting that it's on to us to show Grenfell what little old New York can do in the way of dinners. As many as are in favour of the resolution will—"

"Ay," interrupted Gann and Willis together.

"Carried unanimously," said McFall.

THE END.

NEXT WEEK!

A MEETING OF GREEK!

An exceedingly clever spy story of the time of the late war



The Case of the **INSURANCE MYSTERY**

The Strange and Remarkable Exploits of **CARFAX BAINES**

INSTEAD of reaching the end, sir, we have but arrived at the beginning. That is my sincere belief, Mr. Baines. This matter must be sifted to the very bottom."

Mr. Godfrey Simonside, president of the Imperial Insurance Company, uttered the above words solemnly and portentously. He glanced about the board-room at the portraits of past officials of the company, who looked down on him from their gilded frames. Then he lit a big cigar, adjusted his eye-glasses, and picked up some slips of paper from the table. He was a man of short and crisp utterance, who regarded waste of speech as waste of money.

"I have here," he resumed, "a brief summary of the case. We will go over it, if you please. A year ago Hiram Falkland, a gentleman of independent means, resident in Pimlico, took out a life insurance policy in our company for the sum of twenty thousand pounds, in favour of his wife. That is chapter one. Nine months brings us to the next chapter. Three months ago, at the beginning of last October, Mr. Falkland ran down to Penruth, near Land's End, in Cornwall. Ill-health was the stated motive for the trip. His wife did not accompany him. He found apartments at a fisherman's cottage, and for three successive evenings he went out sailing. The third time he did not come back—that was the evening, you will remember, of the great storm that caused so many wrecks off the Cornwall coast and washed a fleet of boats out to sea from Penruth Bay. Mr. Falkland's yacht—a small craft which he had set forth in alone—was subsequently found floating in the Atlantic bottom up. A week after the storm a body came ashore ten miles from Penruth. It was of a middle-aged man, clean-shaven, with brown hair, which description would fit Mr. Falkland. But the features had been so battered by the rocks that they were absolutely unrecognisable. Nevertheless, Mrs. Falkland identified the corpse as that of her husband, and the fisherman in whose cottage he had lodged held the same opinion."

"The clothes?" asked Baines.

"The man was stripped to his undergarments, and these were unmarked."

"Any rings?"

"No, it seems that he never wore jewelry of any kind," answered the president. "But to resume. The coroner's inquest found that the body was that of Hiram Falkland, and it was buried as such. This brings us to chapter three. Within a reasonable time the widow put in her claim for the insurance money. I was not convinced of her husband's death, a belief which many of the directors shared. But our solicitors assured us that we had not a leg to stand upon—that there was nothing on which to base a charge of fraud. Under the circumstances, having regard for our reputation, there was only one course open to us. A week ago we paid Mrs. Falkland the sum of twenty thousand pounds. In the meantime our own detectives had been keeping a close watch on her, and they are watching her still."

"With what result?"

"None. And that is why I am dissatisfied with them—why I sent for you, Mr. Baines. I want you to take the matter over."

"Am I to understand, then, that you believe Hiram Falkland to be alive?"

"I am certain of it!" exclaimed Godfrey Simonside, striking his fist on the table. "No, there is not a scrap of proof. But I am a reader of character, sir, and in my long term of service at the head of this company I have seldom gone wrong. I studied Mrs. Falkland at each interview we had, and behind her mask of coolness and constant self-possession I saw unmistakable signs of guilt. Her husband is alive, and somewhere in hiding. I am convinced that he deliberately planned to defraud the company—that he deserted the yacht out at sea when darkness came on, and swam ashore with the aid of a life-preserver before the storm broke. That is my theory and belief."

"It is no more than a theory," said Baines. "Whose body did Mrs. Falkland identify?"

"Some ship's officer or sailor thrown in her way by chance. Numerous vessels were lost that night, and many drowned men were cast up all along the coast."

"And some were saved," replied the de-

detective. "One, for instance, was washed ashore on a spar."

"We investigated that case," said the president. "The man was not Falkland. He was one of the crew of a sailing vessel that foundered. Be assured, sir, that we have left no stone unturned to get at the truth. And the result of the inquiries only strengthens my belief. It is a daring and clever case of fraud, materially assisted by the storm, which indeed must have entered into Hiram Falkland's calculations. I should like to hear your opinion, Mr. Baines."

"I have none as yet. I really don't know what to think. Did you look up the antecedents of these people?"

"So far as possible, but with indifferent success. Falkland and his wife seem to have had no friends. They took a house in Pimlico five years ago, but we could not ascertain where they lived prior to that date."

"Had much money?"

"A moderate income. I should think eight hundred a year would be"—

He was interrupted by a rap at the door. The manager entered the room, whispered a few words to the president, and went quietly out again. Mr. Godfrey Simonside uttered an exclamation of anger and dismay, then nodded triumphantly.

"A presumptive proof of guilt at last!" he exclaimed. "Mrs. Falkland, who recently moved from the Pimlico house to a flat in Hyde Park Mansions, mysteriously absconded last night, and that in spite of the vigilance of our two best detectives. She must have known that her movements were shadowed. Fear of detection drove her to flight."

"Come, this grows interesting," said Baines. "I begin to suspect there may be something in your theory, after all."

"I know there is," declared the president. "I will call our men off; you shall have a clear field, Mr. Baines. Find Mrs. Falkland and her missing husband. Bring them to justice, and compel them to disgorge the twenty thousand pounds. Spare no pains, hesitate at no difficulty, and do not count the expense. I am supported in this step by the directors and the shareholders. The whole power of the company, sir, is at my back. Your first move will be to get on the track of the woman."

"Naturally," assented Baines. "But do not be too sanguine, Mr. Simonside. The sudden disappearance of Mrs. Falkland suggests, but does not prove, her guilt. I shall want to question those detectives of yours."

"That can be arranged by this afternoon, sir."

When Baines left at the conclusion of the interview he was still unready to form any opinion on the case, though he was interested in it, and felt that it might amount to something. He purposely made his mind a blank, thus preparing it to take impressions from the result of his investigations. These were at first trivial. He saw the insurance company's detectives later in

the day, and was inclined to favour their theory that Mrs. Falkland had slipped away from Hyde Park Mansions in the guise of a servant or a nursemaid. She had locked up the flat, and sent the key to the agent. As for the twenty thousand pound cheque, it was known that she had turned that into cash and securities.

The work of the next few days was more fruitful. Having ascertained, as far as was possible, that no person answering to Mrs. Falkland's description had left England by any of the foreign-bound steamers, and having craftily advertised for the cabman who had presumably driven the woman from Hyde Park Mansions to another address, Baines made a flying trip down to Penruth. On his return the Pimlico district engaged his attention. He found a servant who had been in the employ of the Falklands for three years, and who was easily persuaded to tell what little she knew about them. The case had now assumed a rather mysterious phase, and the detective scented unforeseen developments.

"On the evening of the storm," he jotted down in his note-book, "a stranger with a black beard inquired at the fisherman's cottage in Penruth for Mr. Falkland, and was informed that the latter had gone out sailing. The stranger was not seen again. Nancy Parke formerly in service with the Falklands, states that they came to England direct from Cape Town, South Africa. Her master and mistress frequently quarrelled, and she had heard the latter address her husband as Jem Tyler."

Several visits to Scotland Yard and a diligent search through files of old newspapers, English and colonial, brought the detective temporarily to a standstill. But on the following morning a cabman turned up in answer to the advertisements, and before night the missing Mrs. Falkland was positively located at an address in the Waterloo-road, whither she had been driven from Hyde Park Mansions, disguised as a hospital nurse. What happened during the next forty-eight hours may be told in the detective's own words, when he called at the offices of the Imperial Insurance Company at noon, and was received in the president's private room.

"I see you have had news," Mr. Godfrey Simonside shrewdly and promptly observed.

"Or good as the case may be," Baines replied. "However, judge for yourself. I have lost Mrs. Falkland, and it is little to my discredit, for she is a woman in a thousand. I had scarcely found her when she gave me the slip. In spite of my precautions, she must have known that she was under surveillance, though she doubtless intended to leave when she did. After she left the house I traced her to Waterloo station—this was the night before last. She booked to Plymouth and caught the express. I followed in a later and slower train. When I arrived Mrs. Falkland was well out to sea,

on board of the steamship Warrimoo, which touched briefly at Plymouth on its way to Melbourne. I came back to town at once, and—"

"Of course, the woman is going to Australia to join her husband," interrupted Mr. Simonside.

"There is good reason to believe so."

"Or perhaps her husband is on board the Warrimoo."

"Possibly."

"What is to be done?"

"I have a plan," said the detective. "The steamer Aztec, belonging to a different line, sails for Melbourne to-morrow from the Thames. It is a much faster boat, and should beat the Warrimoo by two or three days. So you see—"

"Yes, I see!" cried the president. "Get the necessary papers, Mr. Baines, sail on the Aztec, and bring back the guilty couple."

"It won't be my fault if I don't."

"By-the-by, did you discover anything about the woman's movements while she was stopping in the Waterloo Road?"

"She seldom left the house, and she had no callers," replied Baines. "But she did receive several letters bearing English stamps."

"From her husband, of course! They are both on the Warrimoo. You feel sure of that?"

"I can be sure of nothing," the detective answered, "until I arrive at Melbourne. This is a peculiar case, Mr. Simonside."

Thousands of miles from England, over the long blue swell of the ocean, the steamer Aztec was ploughing steadily and swiftly towards her destination. She was sixteen days out from the Thames, and in three days more would drop anchor in the harbour of Melbourne. It was a glorious night, and out of the deep vault of the heavens the stars flashed and twinkled with tropical brilliancy. A concert in the saloon had drawn most of the passengers below, and the noise of voices and laughter, of the merry tinkle of the piano, floated up the companionway. But Carfax Baines preferred the solitude and darkness of the deck, and he was leaning over the rail close to the stern of the vessel, his pipe between his teeth. The voyage had been a prosperous one, and he did not doubt that the Aztec would reach Melbourne before the Warrimoo. What would happen then, whether success or failure awaited him, were questions that defied an answer.

"That fellow Tench puzzles me," the detective mused, as his thoughts turned to another channel. "From the beginning of the trip he has been creeping about at my heels like a cat, and starting a conversation at every opportunity. And once or twice I caught him lurking near the door of my cabin. I don't believe he is entirely in his right mind."

At that moment the individual in question suddenly appeared, stalking noiselessly out

of the gloom. John Tench was a tall, wiry man of middle age, with a heavy brown beard and moustache. He wore gold-rimmed spectacles.

"A fine night, Mr. Bruff," he observed.

The detective, who answered to that name on board, assented.

"It won't be many more till we reach Melbourne," Tench went on.

"We are due in three days," was the reply.

"Think we'll beat the Warrimoo?"

"I hope so."

"Ah, and so do I!"

Tench spoke softly and quickly. He shot a glance about the deserted deck, then suddenly stooped, seized the detective below the waist, and hoisted him half over the low rail. With a cry that was not heard—there was a prolonged burst of applause from the saloon at that instant—Baines partly turned and grasped his assailant by the arms. But the detective was already overbalanced. He slipped over and dangled in the air, still clinging to Tench's arms. The latter, who was the lighter man of the two, uttered a yell of horror as he was drawn after his intended victim.

There were no witnesses to the thrilling tragedy, which transpired in much less time than it takes to tell. The two men dropped with a splash. They went deep under, gripping each other tightly, and their hold was broken when they came to the top. The horror of that moment Baines remembered for his lifetime. The Aztec was already a considerable distance away, driving swiftly on her course, and none on board knew that two of the passengers were left behind in the sea. In vain they shouted; their voices were weak and hoarse from the water they had swallowed. The vessel faded rapidly into the purple mists of the night, the music dwindled to an echo, and Baines and his enemy were left to die.

But they did not drown; by a strange freak of fortune a means of rescue was even then at hand. Both were good swimmers, and they had been keeping afloat for perhaps five minutes, separated by a goodish stretch of water, when they simultaneously discovered a boat dancing on the crest of a billow less than a quarter of a mile away. At once they struck out for it, wasting no breath in speech. It was a hard swim, and the detective was barely able to reach the little craft, which was empty and oarless, and had probably been washed from some vessel during a storm weeks before. He managed to clamber over the gunwale, and was followed an instant later by Tench.

"You murderous scoundrel!" cried Baines, as he pulled a revolver from his pocket. "Come an inch nearer, and I'll smash your skull."

But Tench was completely worn out by his struggle with the sea, and unable to speak. He sank down in the stern, a limp, inect mass, and yielded to the slumber of exhaustion. That the man was mad was the

only construction Baines could put upon what had happened. He, too, felt the effects of the struggle for life, but for some hours he kept himself awake, crouching in the bow of the boat, and scanning the waste of waters with drowsy eyes. Then his head dropped and he slept.

He was awakened by a lusty shout. It was broad daylight, and a boat pulled by four men was just coming alongside; the sun was shining brightly. Three hundred yards away a big ocean steamer lay motionless, her upper deck crowded with people.

Five minutes later the two castaways stood on the deck of the Warrimoo, confused by the swarm of passengers and officers who pressed around them and plied them with questions. Brandy was offered to them, and Tench took a deep pull at a flask. The next instant, with an execration that rang above the hum of voices, he had flung the bottle down and leapt furiously at one of the passengers—a short, well-dressed man with a dark beard. The latter's face turned a ghastly white, and courage and strength seemed to desert him.



Tench uttered a yell of horror as he was drawn after his intended victim.

Tench sat up and rubbed his eyes. He followed Baines in to the rescuing boat, and the little craft which had done them such good service was turned adrift.

"What vessel is that?" asked the detective.

"The Warrimoo," answered one of the sailors.

Baines gave a start of surprise. He was not looking towards Tench, else he would have seen the sudden, ominous flash in the latter's eyes.

He was seized by the throat before he could make a move to escape.

"Your time has come!" Tench cried, snarlingly. "We'll be quits now, Abe Larnach! You black-hearted dog, murderer, wife-stealer—Ah, you won't save him, Sylvia!" he yelled at a woman who had rushed forward with a shrill scream.

The woman was Mrs. Falkland! The sight of her, the mention of Larnach's name, the savage attack on him—here was proof to Baines that at least one of his theories was

correct. In the flash of a second he realised the truth. John Tench was Hiram Falkland!

But even the detective was for a brief space in the thrall of the same numbing paralysis that seemed to have grasped all the spectators. None interfered. Falkland fought like a tiger, bent on murder. Failing to throttle his foe, he bit and scratched him, pommelled and kicked him. He got him down, and the two rolled over and over, scattering the passengers right and left. And when the captain at length interfered, backed by some of his crew, Larnach was more dead than alive. So furiously did Falkland struggle that it took five men to drag him from his prostrate victim and overpower him. Then he quieted down.

The woman's wrath was stronger than her fear, and her eyes were aflame with bitter hatred and scorn of the man who was her lawful husband. She bent anxiously over Larnach, who was supported by two sailors. Though bleeding and in pain, he was conscious of what was going on around him.

"Don't let that ruffian at me again," he pleaded, hoarsely.

"You cur!" cried Falkland. "I would have killed you had they kept their hands off me a bit longer! But I'll have just as sweet a revenge! Back you go to prison to end your days! I call on every one present to bear witness—"

"If I were you, my man, I should keep a close tongue," interrupted the captain. "You've said and done enough."

By forcible means Falkland was quieted for the time being, but later in the day he made a complete statement to Baines and the captain in the privacy of the latter's cabin.

"Yes, my real name is Jem Tyler," he said, "and for a number of years Abe Larnach and I were in the I.D.B. trade at Kimberley, South Africa, which means illicit diamond buying. About six years ago Larnach was nabbed for shooting a constable, and he got a life sentence. There was no case against me, and having lost my partner, I concluded to give up the business. I came down to Cape Town, where there was a woman I thought a good bit of—"

"Had she not promised to marry your partner?" Baines broke in. "You know that this is true and that it was you who betrayed Larnach to the police, and by so doing gained immunity and freedom for yourself."

"I won't deny it," muttered Falkland, who was plainly taken aback. "Have it as you like. Anyway, Larnach was my bitter enemy from that time. I married his sweetheart, Sylvia Porter, and we came home to England and took a house in the Primrose district of London. I had saved enough money to live on nicely. As for the insurance, that was my wife's idea, and there was no intention of fraud about it on my part. To go on, it was last September I heard that Larnach had escaped from the

Breakwater at Cape Town, and a fortnight later I caught a glimpse of him in the Strand. I knew he was after me, and to get out of his way I sent my wife to Manchester—where she had a sister—and I went down to Penrith. But Larnach got on my track and followed me there. The night of the storm, when I was yachting, he stole a sail-boat from the harbour and put out to find me. He ran alongside the yacht, jumped aboard, and tried to shoot me. But I got a grip of him first, and while we were struggling the storm broke like a hurricane. Over went the yacht. The waves washed us apart, and the last I saw of Larnach he was sticking to a spar that happened to come within his reach. I hung on to the yacht, and I was nearly dead when I was picked up towards morning by a vessel that was bound from Liverpool to New Orleans. I was carried to that port—it was a long journey—and while there I read in an English paper that I was dead and buried, and that my wife had claimed the insurance money. I knew at once that Larnach had managed somehow to escape and was putting my wife up to the trick. I had some diamonds with me, sewed up in the lining of my clothes, and I sold these in New York. Then I came home by a fast steamer. I had grown such a heavy beard and moustache that I was not afraid of being recognised. I took lodgings near my wife both at Hyde Park Mansions and in the Waterloo Road, and I learned a good bit about her plans. But she gave me the slip in the end, and sailed with Larnach in the Warrimoo. I followed on the Aztec, hoping to get to Melbourne ahead of them. You know the rest, Mr. Bruff. I was sure that you were a detective, and that you were after me. I was afraid you would spoil my game, and that is why I tried to pitch you overboard. I have told the truth, and I don't care what comes of it. The law will give me a good enough revenge."

Larnach's confession, made after the Warrimoo reached Melbourne, and when he and the woman were lodged in gaol, was a corroboration of the foregoing.

In due course Larnach was sent back to Cape Town to serve out his life sentence, and Jem Tyler, alias Falkland, was convicted in Melbourne of an attempt to murder Baines, and was put away for a term of years.

THE END.

Next Week's Adventures
of Carfax Baines :

THE CASE OF THE
KRYLOFF DIAMOND!

(Continued from page 14.)

"I'm still able to knock people down wot won't be reasonable."

Mr. Clifford looked at him sharply.

"Is that intended as a threat?" he asked.

"Bless yer life, no, guv'nor!" replied the tramp. "I dessay you can spare a couple o' bob, can't yer?"

"No, I cannot."

"Well, a bob, then."

"Not even a penny," said Mr. Clifford. "I've told you once, and I sha'n't tell you again. Get out of here before I lose my patience."

"Ho! So that's it, is it?" exclaimed the tramp coarsely. "Won't give a pore bloke a penny! You'd best change yer mind, or it won't take me long to swipe you one!"

"That's enough!" said Mr. Clifford sharply. "I'll give you just five seconds to get through that gateway. Now then—look sharp!"

"You—you—"

The man let out a string of oaths, and lunged forward at Mr. Clifford as he did so. He was a powerful brute, and obviously a bruiser of the most aggressive type. Mr. Clifford was taken quite by surprise, for he had hardly expected the man to be audacious enough to attack him.

The tramp was enraged, and could see that nobody else was present. Since he couldn't get any money, he wanted the satisfaction of relieving his temper.

And Fullwood looked on, gloating.

"Jolly good!" he muttered. "Now we'll see somethin'! An' later on I'll tell all the chaps that Clifford was fightin' with a tramp! If the Head gets to hear of it, the rotter might get pushed out!"

Fullwood certainly did see something.

Mr. Clifford was sent reeling back, as one of the ruffian's fists thudded into his chest. The man followed it up with another lunge, which would have caught Mr. Clifford on the jaw if he had not dodged in the nick of time.

And then, in a flash, came the change.

Mr. Clifford recovered himself with the agility of a tiger. He crouched back, clenched his fists, and then let himself go. Fullwood stood looking on, breathless.

Crash! Crash!

Quick as thought, Mr. Clifford's fists lunged out. The blows were real beauties, and, although the tramp tried to guard himself, he found it impossible to evade these deadly blows.

One of Mr. Clifford's fists caught him in the jaw, and the other arrived just as the tramp was staggering back. He was evidently as hard as nails, for the heavy knocks did not bowl him over.

But he staggered, swayed, and then recovered himself.

"You—you blamed hound!" he snarled furiously.

He said a few other things, too, and then he came forward like a whirlwind. It was his intention to knock Mr. Clifford into the middle of next week. There was a mur-

derous look in his eyes, and he didn't care what happened.

The sportsmaster didn't budge an inch.

He just stood there, waiting. That rush was enough to sweep any ordinary man off his feet. But Mr. Clifford had a smile on his lips, and he seemed to be enjoying himself quite a lot.

Smash! Biff!

The pair met. But the tramp's blows were swept aside without the slightest difficulty. And he was not merely a novice—he knew quite a lot about boxing. But, in spite of this, he didn't stand an earthly.

Mr. Clifford dealt with him as though he were merely a naughty boy. And the two blows which did get home were delivered by Mr. Clifford himself. And the tramp was pulled up short in the middle of his rush.

He was practically lifted off his feet, and he crashed over backwards, and lay on the ground, cursing violently. Mr. Clifford bent over him, caught him by the scruff of the neck, and yanked him up.

"Had enough, my friend?" he asked smoothly. "You must think yourself lucky that you're not given in charge. Now, then—this way!"

With an exhibition of strength which took Fullwood by complete surprise, Mr. Clifford jerked the fellow forward, and a moment later he was sent reeling forth into the road.

He stood there, swaying drunkenly.

But he had had quite enough to convince him that Mr. Clifford was the wrong customer to tackle. One taste of those fists had been quite enough for the tramp. So he contented himself by swearing even more.

Mr. Clifford made one move towards him. The man fled.

And, in the meantime, Fullwood scuttled across into the Ancient House. He entered Study A, and closed the door. Then he sat down in front of the fire, and lit a cigarette.

"We were wrong," he remarked.

"Wrong?" said Gulliver. "What about?"

"Clifford," said Fullwood. "The beast can box like a professional. I never saw anythin' like it in my life! He's a terror!"

"What the dickens are you gettin' at?" asked Bell.

Fullwood explained, and his chums listened with great interest. They certainly had no idea that in the near future they would have reason to remember this apparently trivial incident.

CHAPTER VII.

JACK GREY'S TEMPTATION.



REGINALD PITT looked round the Remove dormitory, and shook his head.

"The silly ass will overdo it—that'll be the result!" he muttered, with a frown.

"It's a potty idea, working late, and then getting up early. You can't burn the giddy candle at both ends!"

He was much concerned about Jack Grey.

A day or two had passed, and Jack had been slogging away for all he was worth. Every minute of his time had been spent with his books. He had been swotting without a single breathing space.

Only the previous evening Pitt had noticed that Jack was looking far from himself. His cheeks were rather haggard, and he looked generally pale. Hard work is all very well, but too much of it is liable to make a fellow show the effects pretty plainly.

And now, while the rising bell was still going, Pitt sat up in bed and found that his study chum was not present in the dormitory. This could mean only one thing.

Jack was already at his work. He had probably gone down to his study with the first show of daylight. It was a silly thing to do, and Pitt meant to talk to him seriously. It was all very well to go in for a scholarship—just for the sake of the honour—but there was no need to do this kind of thing.

Pitt dressed hurriedly, without saying anything to the other juniors.

They were not turning out yet. There was always a minute or two of grace before the Remove actually turned out. And by the time the others were beginning to get dressed, Pitt was just finishing his toilet. He hurried out, and went downstairs.

He took a glance round the Triangle, and as it was a fine, brisk, frosty morning, he thought that Jack might be taking some exercise. If so, it wouldn't be so bad.

But there was no sign of anybody in the Triangle yet. So Reggie hurried along the Remove passage, and turned into Study E. He paused just inside the door, staring blankly.

The electric light was on, the blind was down, and the atmosphere felt chill and stuffy. And there was Jack Grey, sitting in the chair before the table—sprawling over, with his pale, drawn face resting on the crook of his arm.

"Well, I'm hanged!" muttered Pitt.

Jack was asleep—he had dropped off in the middle of his work. And a soft, sympathetic look came into Reggie's eyes. He felt extremely sorry for his overworked chum.

"Poor old chap!" he murmured. "I can't very well slang him for this. By jingo! He's got some determination!"

Pitt understood at once.

Jack must have got up very early indeed. For he had come down, and had been obliged to use the electric light. Possibly he had awakened at about five, and, with his mind full of his work, he had been unable to get

to sleep again. So he had dressed and come down.

And this was the result.

Pitt closed the door, went round the table, and shook Jack by the shoulder.

"Come on, old son!" he said gently. "This won't do, you know."

Jack Grey stirred slightly.

"Wake up—wake up!" urged Pitt, as the other junior murmured something which sounded like Greek. "My hat! I'm blessed if you're not doing your giddy lessons in your sleep! Wake up, you chump!"

He shook Jack even more vigorously, and the latter raised his head, and gazed at Pitt with listless, heavy eyes. There was something about his appearance which Reggie did not like at all.

"Oh, hallo!" said Jack weakly. "Go away, Reggie—I'm—I'm busy! I must get through these exercises—"

"Blow the exercises!" interrupted Pitt. "Rouse yourself! What the dickens do you mean by being here at this time in the morning?"

Jack seemed to awaken more fully, and looked startled.

"Morning?" he repeated dazedly. "Oh, don't rot, Reggie! It's not morning! It's only just eleven o'clock at night—"

"My dear ass, you're still in the land of dreams!" interrupted Pitt. "It'll be breakfast time soon, and the Remove is tumbling down—"

"It's not morning—it's not!" said Grey irritably. "Don't try to fool me, Reggie! I—I'm not feeling quite up to the mark. I think it's silly of you to make such jokes. Look at the electric light—"

"Oh, you needn't let that spoof you," put in Pitt. "What about this?"

He jerked the blind up sharply, and then went over and switched off the light. Jack turned and looked at the window in a wondering kind of way. He could no longer believe that he was being fooled.

"But—but I can't understand!" he muttered. "I came down here soon after the fellows went to sleep, you know. I meant to work until about one o'clock. I—I must have been here all night!"

Pitt glared at him.

"You madman!" he said severely. "So that's it! Instead of going to sleep, and getting the rest you required, you turned out again and came down here. Of course, you dropped off at your work. And now you feel stiff and achey and generally unfit. There's nothing like a good warm bed to thoroughly restore the tissues—as Archie would say."

Grey passed a hand over his brow.

"I had to come down—I had to!" he muttered anxiously. "Haven't you heard about Burnett?"

"Burnett?"

"He's one of the College House fellows—"

"Oh, yes," said Pitt. "A rather obscure chap—never does anything, and goes about in shabby bags. What about him?"

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"His people are awfully poor, I believe," said Jack. "Anyhow, he's in for this scholarship, and he's swotting like mad. Lots of fellows told me that I shall have to look sharp, or Burnett will whack me."

"Don't you believe it," declared Pitt. "There are a good few other entrants for the scholarship, but they're mostly duds—they're only doing it because their paters or maters told them to. They haven't got their heart in the work, and they don't care a toss if they lose—"

"I know—I know!" muttered Grey. "But Burnett isn't that kind. He needs it! Don't you understand, Reggie. If he doesn't win the scholarship, he'll have to leave St. Frank's at the end of this term. And he's fighting with all his power to be on top."

Reggie looked at his chum curiously.

"I say, why the dickens don't you chuck it up?" he asked frankly. "You're half killing yourself, and this scholarship doesn't matter twopence to you—your pater's got plenty of money. Why not drop out, and let Burnett go in and win. He's bound to be on top if you slack off. And think of what it'll mean to him."

Jack Grey was silent.

He couldn't tell Reggie the truth—his father had forbade him. But, actually, the scholarship meant just as much to him as it did to Burnett. That's why he had got into a kind of panic, and was working so strenuously. Both juniors were in the same position. They had to win the scholarship to remain at St. Frank's.

It was a fight—a grim battle for supremacy—and one of them had to go under. Jack had heard quite a lot about Burnett during the last few days, and he had grown to fear the College House junior in no uncertain way. For both the entrants were working for a big, definite object.

But Jack had made a grave blunder. He had not improved his chances by working so hard and burning the midnight oil. He had undermined his health, and this all night sleep on the table had done far more harm than Jack even dreamed of.

"Why not give it up?" repeated Pitt. "It would only be decent—"

"I can't—I can't!" said Jack despairingly. "Oh, Reggie! You don't understand! I've got to win—I must!"

Pitt shrugged his shoulders.

"Well, you know best, of course," he said. "Now, the best thing you can do is to come out into the Triangle and have a brisk walk round. You must be as stiff as a poker."

"But—but I've got to work—"

"Confound the work!" snapped Reggie.

He seized Jack's arm and hauled him up. The weary junior rose to his feet, took a step or two, and then swayed dizzily. Before he could save himself, he staggered, clutching at the table. Then he fell to the floor with a crash, and lay there.

"Good heavens!" gasped Pitt. "What the—"

He paused, absolutely alarmed. For Jack

had gone as pale as a ghost, and was struggling vainly to rise. He was shivering, too. And then, as Pitt tried to help him up, he flushed deeply.

"You—you idiot!" said Pitt, his voice harsh with anxiety. "You've overdone it—that's what's the matter! I'm blessed if you're not in a fever! No wonder—sleeping in this icy room all night long!"

Undoubtedly, Jack Grey was suffering from the effects of that foolhardy vigil. Pitt managed to get him into the easy-chair, and left him there. He hurried out, and met Archie Glenthorne in the passage.

"What ho, laddie!" said Archie gaily. "Up with the lark, and all that sort of stuff! I mean to say, the morning was so dashed bright that I simply had to leap out. Large supplies of priceless energy. You know the thing, old darling—that Kruschen feeling, as it were. Flying over 'buses, and what not. Pushing houses over—"

"Sorry, Archie, but it's no time for rotting now!" interrupted Pitt sharply. "Just go inside and look after Grey, will you? I'm off to fetch Mr. Lee. Don't let the ass move out of his chair."

And Pitt rushed away. Archie adjusted his monocle and gazed after him.

"Well, that, as it were, was somewhat terse!" he murmured. "The old bean absolutely fails to grab the trend. However, we will see what there is to be seen! Absolutely!"

Archie walked into Study E, and then his monocle dropped out of his eye. He stared at Jack Grey blankly.

"But, dash it all!" he ejaculated. "I mean to say! It appears, old thing, that the tissues are absolutely wilting! Pale cheeks, and vast hollows beneath the optic regions!"

"I—I'm all right, Archie!" murmured Grey.

"Absolutely not!" said Archie firmly. "Why, my only sainted aunt! You'll pardon the frankness, old sportsman, but you look absolutely foul! I mean, the whole bally system is absolutely withering!"

Archie did his best to cheer the ailing junior up, and he was still engaged on this task when Pitt arrived, accompanied by the Housemaster. Nelson Lee was looking rather anxious.

"Come, Grey, my boy!" he said gently. "What's the trouble?"

He went over to Jack's side and gave him a quick, keen examination.

"Am I going to be ill, sir?" asked Grey.

"I hope not, my boy; but you are certainly going into the school sanatorium," replied Lee briskly. "I shall not punish you for your reckless conduct, but I am very annoyed with you. I admire a boy who works hard, Grey, but you have been very foolish indeed."

Jack had heard none of Lee's last words.

"The—the sanatorium, sir!" he gasped. "Oh, but—but I can't! It's impossible, sir! I've got to work for the scholarship—"

"Good gracious, boy, don't you understand that you have weakened your whole system by this incessant toil?" asked Lee sharply. "You cannot possibly keep going if you do not have sound rest. You shall have it now, for I mean you to remain in the sanatorium until you are fully recovered."

"How—how long?"

"Possibly a week," replied Lee gravely.

"A week!" whispered Jack brokenly. "Oh! Then—then I shall get behind, and I sha'n't win the scholarship——"

"You will never win the scholarship if you keep on with your work!" interrupted the Housemaster. "I am sending you into the sanatorium, Grey, so that you shall have the best chance. Rest is what you need—and rest is what you must have till you are yourself again. Good gracious! If I allowed you to continue your studies you would be an utter wreck within a few days."

"You—you think it best, sir?" asked Jack weakly.

"I know it is!"

And so, half an hour later, the tired Removeite was tucked away in one of the sanatorium beds in a deep slumber. Dr. Brett had already examined him, and he was by no means optimistic.

"You only just caught the lad in time," the doctor said to Lee. "Another day of that kind of thing and the hospital would have been the place for him. Not only is his brain fagged, but his whole system is weakened. And that night in the study could easily lead to pneumonia."

"But you surely don't think——"

"Oh, no!" interrupted the doctor. "The youngster is as strong as they make 'em, and I don't fear any complications. What he needs is sleep and rest—and then more sleep and more rest. I don't think he'll have anything worse than a simple cold."

Of course, the whole Remove was talking about Grey's illness during the day. The juniors were not very sympathetic, but there was nothing surprising in this. Schoolboys are always somewhat contemptuous of illness—they regard it as a sign of molly-coddling.

But Nelson Lee's treatment was necessary.

After three days, Jack was more like himself. He had recovered rapidly. Sound sleep, and good food, had restored him in a wonderful way. And now he began to chafe—he felt that he was quite capable of continuing the fight. It was madness to remain here.

His cold had developed and had passed. It had proved a very simple affair, as Dr. Brett had intimated.

And, in the meantime, events in the Remove had been going on very much as usual. Jack was sadly missed on the football field, but the Remove eleven had to do as well as it could without him.

And Burnett, the College House boy, was forging ahead.

He knew that this was his big chance. He

feared Grey—he had known all along that Grey was almost a certain winner. But Jack's illness gave Burnett the chance to forge ahead.

And Burnett was forging. He went at it steadily—with grim determination and persistent effort. The result was inevitable. At the end of four days he was confident that the scholarship was his—he was in a winning position, ahead of all competitors.

But the spirit to win was still strong within Jack Grey. And on the fourth day he pleaded with Lee to let him up. He almost had tears in his eyes as he made the appeal.

And, as a result, the Head himself sent for Jack Grey. He gave instructions for the lad to get up and to come to his study. Jack obeyed with alacrity. Hope was freshly alive in his breast.

Just outside, after dressing, he met Pitt.

"Oh, here you are!" said Reggie. "How goes it?"

"I'm feeling fine; absolutely in the pink!" replied Grey, with the flush of health in his cheeks. "But I've lagged behind, Reggie; I'm horribly stale!"

"Then why not chuck it all up——"

"I can't chuck it up—I won't!" said Jack fiercely. "I've got no hope now—I'm dead sure of it—but I'll put up a good fight. Burnett's the chap who's going to win the scholarship."

Jack hurried off to the Head's study, feeling that he had spoken the truth. There was a strong conviction within him that his own chances were completely gone. Burnett had received such a long start that he was now on safe ground. All Jack's efforts would be useless. But he would try!

Then he found himself in the Head's study, and Dr. Stafford was looking at him in a thoughtful, kindly way.

"Well, my boy, how do you feel now?" he asked.

"Fine, sir, thank you," replied Jack. "Mr. Lee says I'm quite recovered, and that I can get back to work again."

"You are still determined to make an effort for the Lytton Trust Scholarship?"

"Oh, rather, sir!" said Jack eagerly. "I don't suppose I've got much chance now, but I'm going to work my hardest to win!"

"I greatly admire your spirit, Grey," said the Head kindly, "it is the spirit that conquers. You have my very best wishes, and I hope you will go in and win. But you have a severe task, and you must not over-tax yourself."

"I won't sir," said Jack fervently. "I've learned my lesson, sir, and I shall work hard and take plenty of rest, too——"

The door opened abruptly and Mr. Stockdale burst in.

"Dr. Stafford—Dr. Stafford!" he exclaimed urgently. "Oh, I beg your pardon! I did not know that you were engaged, sir——"

"What is it, Mr. Stockdale?" inquired the Head in surprise.

"I wish you to come at once to Mr. Pagett's study!" said the Housemaster of the College House. "I think Mr. Pagett's ill. I went there just now, and he is quite unable to speak to me—"

"Good gracious!" ejaculated the Head in alarm. "I must go at once! Whatever can be the matter with Mr. Pagett?"

They both hurried out of the study, the Head mechanically closing the door behind him. In his sudden anxiety, he seemed to have overlooked the fact that Jack Grey was there.

Jack hardly knew what to do. Had the Head finished with him? Would he want to speak to him again? The junior thought it would be better to go, and he walked towards the door.

Then he paused. The Head would think it peculiar, perhaps. He had better remain behind for a few minutes, anyhow. He idly gazed at the Head's desk. And then, suddenly, he started.

There, right before his eyes, he saw something which sent his heart jumping and leaping. On Dr. Stafford's desk lay a bundle of papers. One look was sufficient to tell Jack Grey that they were examination papers—complete with all the answers to every question and problem.

"The Lytton Trust exam. papers!" gasped Jack. "They're here!"

He stared at them in a fascinated kind of way. He was alone in the study, and never would get such a chance as this again. The temptation was an overpowering one.

And Jack felt himself weakening—weakening!

CHAPTER VIII.

THE TORMENT OF CONSCIENCE.



NEVER had Jack Grey believed that he would have an opportunity of seeing the exam. papers before the actual day. Yet here they were, placed before him so temptingly that the desire to peep at them was almost irresistible.

It was cruel—this temptation.

And it was almost more than any normal boy could withstand, even under ordinary circumstances. But Jack Grey's circumstances were different. He was behind with his work—seemingly hopelessly behind.

In all his young life Jack had been honourable and upright. Never had he descended to any trickery or despicable conduct. Such a thing was utterly foreign to his nature.

But the sight of those exam. papers changed it.

Just for a minute or two he seemed to go off his head. He didn't know where he was—he forgot all else except those papers. The thought of Burnett had come into his mind at first—Burnett, the boy who was



"Had enough, my friend?" inquired Mr. Clifford smoothly. "You must think yourself lucky that you're not given in charge."

bound to win. But even Burnett had gone now.

Jack felt that he had to look at those answers. Knowledge is power—and he would be dead certain of winning if he could only have this assistance. And he had to win! It was his only chance of remaining in the school. Only for a second did he hesitate.

Then, feverishly, he turned the papers over, and studied them, concentrating as he had never concentrated before. Fresh after his long rest, his brain felt ten times more active than usual. He felt a glow of triumph surging through him.

He mastered every question—and memorised the answers. In that short spell he obtained a brief but illuminating mastery of the whole examination questions. And with this forbidden knowledge in his possession, there would be absolutely no question as to his ultimate success.

He would beat Burnett, after all!

Still the Head's study remained quiet. And, as though to make doubly sure, Jack went through the papers again and again. Then, as a test for himself, he put the

papers in order, as he found them, and went across to the window. He stared out unseeingly.

His mind was fully occupied. He was running over the answers, and making sure that he had memorised them accurately. There was not one that he was hazy on. He had mastered the lot.

"Why, Grey, I had forgotten all about you!"

Jack turned with a start—a guilty start. Unknown to him, the Head had entered, and a sick feeling came over Jack as he realised that he might have been caught red-handed a few moments earlier. But the Head had found him standing at the window, and could suspect nothing.

Jack was enormously glad that the light was behind him—so that the deep flush on his face was not apparent. He fought to control himself, and when he spoke he sounded calm.

"I—I thought I'd wait till you came back, sir," he managed to say.

"Quite so, Grey—quite so," replied the Head. "Well, I do not think you need wait any longer. Go ahead with your studies, but do not overtax yourself. That is my advice. Do your best, lad, and I wish you every success."

The Head patted Jack on the shoulder, and took his hand. Jack felt as though he would like to sink through the floor. All he wanted to do was to escape—to get away. For one horrible second he was on the point of blurting out his guilt. The Head's kindly attitude was like turning a knife in a wound.

"Thank—thank you, sir!" said Jack thickly.

He went towards the door.

"Oh, just one moment!" said Dr. Stafford. "Please don't spread any story that Mr. Pagett is ill, Grey. Mr. Stockdale was quite mistaken—Mr. Pagett was merely caught in a kind of paroxysm. He suffers severely from asthma in this cold weather. He is much better now."

"Yes, sir," said Jack, having hardly heard a word.

He managed to get out, and his relief at finding himself alone was completely destroyed a second later. For he had hardly taken a dozen steps along the passage before he met Reginald Pitt. The latter was looking eager and anxious. He looked at Jack curiously.

"All right?" he asked.

"Eh? I—I—"

"Has the Head forbidden you to carry on?"

"No—no!" gasped Jack, controlling him-

self with an effort. "The Head's told me that I can go on with the work—"

"Then what the dickens are you looking so dazed about?" asked Reggie, giving his chum a clap on the back. "There's one thing for you to do now, old son. You've got to go in and win! You'll do it, too. By Jove! I admire your pluck! Get on to the job, old son, and come out with flying colours!"

"I'll try to!" said Grey huskily.

"Try!" repeated Reggie. "Why, you don't know your own capacity! You'll soon make up for lost time, and then you'll beat Burnett into fits. I know you, Jack, and I'm downright certain that you'll score an honourable victory!"

Jack winced. It was another turn of the knife. An honourable victory! After he had descended to the despicable crime of cribbing! Somehow or other, the madness of the whole thing came to him in a kind of flood.

He didn't exactly remember how he got away from Reggie Pitt. He believed he made some excuse about wanting to get away by himself, so that he could think clearly about the work he had to start on.

But he did get away.

And then the shame of the whole dreadful thing came to him with such force that he could have cried aloud with remorse. And now it was too late! It was done—he had committed an unpardonable sin.

If such a thing came out, he would be shunned by all the others, he would be despised and gazed upon with contempt. He—he who had always held his head so high in the school.

Perhaps the truth never would come out! Somehow, Jack seemed to have an idea that everybody knew it, and he avoided any fellows who seemed to be coming in his direction.

It was his own conscience that was causing the trouble.

He knew that he had done wrong—with all his heart and soul he wished that he had not yielded to that sudden temptation. For now he knew the answers to all the examination questions. It would be easy for him to win the scholarship. It was like betting on a cert.

And supposing he did win?

What then? Would he be able to enjoy his victory? Ever afterwards, all through his life, he would remember this disgraceful fraud. It would always be before his eyes as an example of dishonesty and cheating. He almost felt ill with the worry of it.

"Oh, what made me be such a fool?" he asked himself bitterly. "Some other chaps might be able to do it—but I can't! It's too much! I've been a cad—a miserable, contemptible cad! If I use this knowledge I sha'n't be fit to touch! I shall be outside the pale."

He was amazed with himself.

He could not possibly understand what insanity had come over him in the Head's

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study. If he had been really decent he wouldn't have even glanced at the papers. He would have turned his back, resisting the temptation.

Yes, that was it—he was not decent—he was nothing better than a common cribber! And this thought caused Jack Grey to pull himself together, and to hold his head up once more.

Of course, there was only one thing to be done.

There was only one way out of this position, and he would have to be brave and take it. He would withdraw from the scholarship! Only by doing that would he be able to recover his self respect.

And, then and there—barely half an hour after he had made his terrible slip—he came to this positive decision. He would stand down. Burnett would go in and win.

It meant the end of everything for Jack.

All his hopes and dreams came tumbling about his ears. At the end of this term he would have to leave St. Frank's for good. He would go, bidding good-bye to his friends and the dear old place. But one thing made him feel proud and pleased.

He would leave honourably.

It was better to do that than to stay by means of fraud. He could, at least be happy and content. He would not have that dreadful gnawing of conscience which would be constantly with him if he used his unlawful knowledge.

And, having come to this decision, he felt better. But what a fool he had been! With his own hand he had destroyed his last chance of winning the scholarship and earning the right to remain at St. Frank's. But there was no other way out of the difficulty.

Then another thought came to him.

What would he tell the others—how could he explain to Reggie? Grey was rather dismayed for a few moments, until he thought the thing out. He had just come from the sanatorium, fresh and eager for work. There were several days before the exam.—plenty of time to get right into it again.

What would the juniors say when he told them that he was backing out? Jack could imagine their absolute astonishment. And he shrank from making up any untruthful excuse. Unless he was very careful his one dishonest act—for which he was truly remorseful—would lead him into a morass of lies. And the thought of that was rather appalling.

Then came the solution.

He would go on with his studies—just the same as though his determination was as strong as ever. He would do the best he could, and perhaps he would be able to recover his own self-respect completely. And on the very day of the examination he would back out.

The evil moment would be put off until the very last, in that way. On the morning of the exam. it would be easy enough for him

to say that he didn't feel like it—that he considered his chance so slim that he did not want to carry on. Any excuse, in fact, would suffice. But to really go through the exam. was out of the question—simply because he knew all the answers by heart.

Having made up his mind, Jack went back to the Ancient House, and was congratulated by Handforth and De Valerie and many others for getting out of the sanny so quick.

"And now, I suppose, you're going to buckle to again?" asked De Valerie.

"Yes, rather," said Jack.

"That's the idea—you'll win, old son," said De Valerie. "This rest has given you just the strength you require."

Jack felt very bitter as he went into Study E. De Valerie had been right. He had never felt more fit. And yet he would have to work for nothing. He would work, and there would be no reward. Well, it was his own doing—so he couldn't grumble.

There was no question that Reggie Pitt noticed a marked difference in Jack Grey during the ensuing day or two. Reggie was a shrewd fellow, and it seemed to him that his study chum had something on his mind.

But he put it down to the worry of the exam. And Pitt did not bother Jack by asking questions, or trying to pry into his state of mind.

As for Burnett, of the College House, he was still working steadily—with deliberate energy and determination. He knew very well that Jack would do his best to make up for lost time. But Burnett believed that he would win. He had the better chance now.

All the other entrants were not worth worrying about. They had merely put their names down because they had been instructed to do so by their people. Their hearts were not in the fight. It would be a contest between Jack Grey and Burnett. And the College House junior was still anxious.

He knew that the Ancient House fellow was dangerous—it would be ridiculous to think anything else, or to hope for an easy victory. Burnett's only chance of success was to stick at it, as hard as he could go.

And he stuck.

And then, at last, Jack Grey's period of worry and anxiety came to an end. In short, the morning of the exam. arrived. And even as he was getting dressed, Jack came to a definite decision.

He had been thinking over it for some time, and he knew that the only way to ease his mind was to confess his great fault. In that way he would atone, and wash out the stain.

He would say nothing to the others, but after sitting down for the exam., he would make some excuse and take his papers to the Headmaster. And he would tell Dr. Stafford the simple truth.

As for his punishment, he would take this

bravely. It wouldn't mean the sack—after confessing, the Head wouldn't be so harsh as that. Jack could not really picture what the Head would do, and he didn't try. He was very quiet when he came downstairs.

Nobody thought anything of this, because they knew what a great deal he had on his mind. Even Reggie Pitt hardly spoke to him. He did not want to worry the junior at such an acute time.

All those who had entered for the scholarship were accommodated in a corner of Big Hall, where they would be quiet and undisturbed. And Mr. Langton, the Sixth Form master, would preside.

Jack Grey took his place, his face firm and set. Now that he had decided what to do, he felt strangely relieved. The papers were placed in readiness on the desk before him.

It was not quite time to start yet, and the other entrants for the scholarship were talking together in a little group. Jack had no doubt that they were discussing the chances of Burnett and himself, and weighing up which one would gain the most marks.

Idly, and without really looking at them, Jack commenced turning the papers over, glancing at the difficult questions and problems. Then, suddenly, his attention became fixed.

He felt himself growing pale, and his heart was thumping rapidly within him. He stared at the papers with amazement.

For he became aware of something which well nigh swept him off his feet, and which sent a flood of excitement surging through him.

The exam. papers were not the same!

CHAPTER IX.

HOPE RENEWED!



JACK GREY wondered if he was dreaming.

What could it mean? Why had the papers been changed? He knew that he had not made a mistake, for all these questions were

totally and absolutely different.

There was not one that in any way resembled the others.

Feverishly, he looked through them again and again. This exam. was of quite another character. And he sat back in his chair, and stared straight before him, thinking hard.

And then a glimmering of the truth came to him.

He had not been able to see it before, because he had had no occasion to ponder over the matter. The papers he had seen in the Head's study must have been the papers connected with the previous exam. for the Lytton Trust Scholarship. And in his excitement and madness, he had not even noticed the date—even supposing that the papers had contained a date.

And hope sprang afresh into Jack's breast. For this meant that he was freed!

There was nothing to prevent him going ahead now. He knew none of these answers, and was just as much entitled to enter for the scholarship as any of the others.

True, he had been guilty of a dishonest act, but he had repented of that. And what he had seen made absolutely no difference to this examination. He suddenly felt that the air was purer, and that life was sweeter.

For now there was a chance for him.

And, on the spur of the moment, he made up his mind to go in and win. He would work his hardest, and do his very best. Whether he would be able to beat Burnett would be proved later.

But Jack felt enormously thankful for the impulse which had urged him to continue his studies. He had not made a pretence of doing so. During the last few days he had worked hard, and had crammed his head with all sorts of knowledge—knowledge which he had believed would be unnecessary.

But now he would use it—and he only had Burnett to fear. It would be a very close fight between the two. And there was no doubt that the College House boy had much the better chance.

Indeed, Jack Grey felt that he was fighting against hopeless odds. The conviction was within him that Burnett would be the winner. But there was a chance—a slim thread of a chance! And Jack caught at it as a drowning man will clutch at a straw.

And such was his state of mind that he started work, fifteen minutes later, with every atom of his will power concentrated on the difficult task before him.

He worked like one possessed.

He had no knowledge of the passage of time. He did not even know that others were near him. He became so absorbed that he seemed to be detached, and far away.

Noises from outside which disturbed other exam. workers, did not even penetrate to Jack Grey's senses. He was in a world apart. And almost before he knew it, the exam. was over.

He had been writing for hours—until his hand was cramped. But every ounce of his honourably acquired knowledge was packed into those sheets of writing. He had done his best—and nobody could do more than that.

"Well, old man, how did it go?"

Jack found Reggie Pitt beside him, and he was hauled along to Study E, where he came out of his trance. Full realisation of the truth came to him now. He had done his utmost for the Scholarship—and he had performed nothing dishonourable. That was the thought that thrilled him.

"I expect you'll be pretty impatient until the result is announced, eh?" said Pitt. "I think they post it on the board in the morning, don't they?"

"As soon as that?" asked Jack eagerly.

"Yes, I believe so," said Pitt. "The Head's jolly smart, you know—he doesn't believe in wasting time. Anyhow, you

needn't worry. The result will be announced some time to-morrow, for certain."

"I think Burnett will win," said Jack, quietly.

"Rats!" grinned Reggie. "You're only saying that because you want to kid yourself. But I'd back you any day. After the way you've been working, it'll be a downright shame if you don't come out on top."

"Oh, I hope I do win!" said Jack fervently.

Pitt regarded him curiously.

"I can't quite get to the bottom of you lately, my lad," he said, in a fatherly way. "Why should you be so tremendously keen? Why have you been making yourself ill over the blessed scholarship?"

"I told my pater I'd do my best to win——"

"Very likely, but that's no reason why you should work yourself to a giddy shadow!" said Reggie. "Hang it all, the scholarship's not much good to you, even if you win it! You're safe, in any case. Your pater's got pots of money——"

"I wish you wouldn't keep talking about it!" interrupted Jack uncomfortably.

"Good enough, old son, I'll drop the subject," said Reggie. "And now, O one of much learning, you can afford to slack off a bit. How about buzzing outside for a little kick in front of goal?"

"Oh, splendid!" said Grey eagerly.

He could find time for a little football practice now, and the healthy exercise did him a world of good. But that evening was an anxious time for him. And at night he found it difficult to sleep.

Somehow or other, he dropped off at last—in spite of a conviction that he would remain awake, tossing about until the morning.

As soon as the rising-bell sounded Jack leapt out of bed. He felt rather heavy, but he was into his clothing almost before anybody else thought of leaving their beds.

Reggie Pitt found him marching disconsolately up and down the lobby later on.

"It's not on the board yet!" said Jack. "I was hoping that the result might be out."

"After breakfast, I expect," said Pitt cheerfully.

Until breakfast was ready, Jack hovered in the region of the lobby and the notice board. But he hovered in vain. Then the bell sounded for breakfast. As soon as the meal was over, the chums of Study E were the first out.

They made a rush for the lobby, and Reggie Pitt gave a whoop as he saw a fresh notice on the board.

"It's up!" he yelled.

Jack Grey came to a halt, his face flushing. Somehow, he dared not approach the board—he feared to see what the result was. But Pitt was there, and he gazed at the notice, suddenly calm. He turned, and looked at Jack thoughtfully.

"Just think of it!" he exclaimed. "Only one mark less!"

The world seemed to stop turning.

"Then I've lost!" said Jack, in a whisper.

"Lost!" grinned Pitt. "Why, you ass, you've won! Burnett's second—with one mark less than your total! My hat! What a near thing! The closest fight for years!"

Jack Grey ran up to the notice board, and gazed at it with pride gleaming in his eyes—with joy expressed in every line of his features. Yes, it was true enough!

He had beaten Burnett by the narrow margin of one mark! All the others were nowhere, as the school had expected. Jack found that Pitt was wringing his hand, and clapping him on the back.

"Congrats., old man!" said Reggie delightedly. "I was trying to spoof you just now! This is great—absolutely topping! I knew you'd win, but I hardly thought it would be such a narrow squeak!"

Jack was looking very serious now.

"What's wrong?" demanded Reggie. "This is something to be pleased about, you ass! Don't be down in the mouth——"

"I'm thinking about Burnett!" interrupted Jack slowly. "I say, what a rotten shock for him! Just one mark, you know! Poor chap! I—I feel awfully cut up about him."

"You soft ass!" chuckled Pitt. "There was only one who could win, and we're naturally sorry for the loser. After all, it was only a fight between the two of you. You couldn't both come out on top."

And then Jack found himself being congratulated by all the rest of the Remove, who had come crowding up.

He hardly knew whether he was on his head or his heels. And then, in the middle of the excitement, somebody told him that there was a letter for him in the rack.

He hadn't even thought of looking there this morning; his mind had been too busy in other directions. He quickly went to the rack, feeling sure that the letter would be from his father.

He was right. The envelope was addressed in Sir Crawford's strong, broad writing. Jack had been hoping for a letter a day or two earlier, for he had been sure that his father would send him some words of encouragement.

Now, of course, it was too late—the exam. was over, and the result was known. But perhaps Sir Crawford had been too busy to write before. Jack took the letter to Study E, and was glad that none of the others had followed him. He ripped open the flap eagerly.

And then he stared. Tucked away be-

Coupon No. 4. OUR STORY VOTING COMPETITION, "The Nelson Lee Library," No. 396, Jan. 6, 1923.

Story Title:—JACK GREY'S TEMPTATION.

(IMPORTANT—This coupon must be enclosed with your attempt in the above competition.)

tween the double sheet of notepaper were three pound notes. Jack gazed at them in wonder. Under the circumstances, he failed to understand how his father could afford such a handsome tip.

He commenced reading the letter. Then his eyes sparkled and gleamed. His face became flushed, and he stood there, fairly quivering with intense excitement.

"My goodness!" he murmured. "It's—it's impossible!"

Eagerly, feverishly, he read the letter through again.

"Well, I'm blessed!" he gasped. "It's like reading out of a book! It's too amazing to be true! Hurrah! Dear old dad! What a terrific load off his mind!"

For the third time he read the letter. It was not particularly long, but the information it contained was of extraordinary interest.

"Grey Towers, Wayling, Berks.

"My Dear Jack,—I have the most wonderful news for you. It is quite impossible to go into any details in this letter, and even if I did so, you would not be interested.

"Since you were at home, a very great change has taken place in our fortunes. Without going into exact facts, I can nevertheless tell you that the very speculations I feared would bring about my ruin, have brought greater fortune than ever. I cannot tell you how this has taken place, but the simple fact remains that my financial worry is at an end.

"With regard to the scholarship, if you feel like going ahead, by all means do so, but it is not at all necessary now, from a financial point of view. You may, of course, please yourself. Perhaps the examination has already taken place. I have been so busy that I have not taken particular notice of your recent letters. If the exams. have been held, I hope you have won, if only for the honour.

"The enclosed trifle may come in useful to you, as I know you have been rather short of pocket-money of late.

"I shall write you again within a day or two, giving further news. Thank Heaven this change has come about. You cannot imagine what relief it is to me. Your future is assured, and you need not worry your young head any further.

"With all my love, your affectionate
"FATHER."

It was scarcely surprising that Jack Grey was almost lifted out of himself. A letter of this nature was the very last thing in

the world he had expected. He had taken it for granted that his father's fortunes were at the lowest possible ebb, and that there was no chance of their recovery.

But now, all in a flash, the whole situation was changed. Quite apart from the scholarship, Jack's own future at St. Frank's was safe. All the clouds had cleared away, and the horizon was bright.

And he was still feeling rather dazed by the sudden shock, when Pitt entered the study. He saw Jack's flushed and excited face, and regarded it with astonishment.

"Why this thushness, O excited youth?" inquired Reggie. "In other words, what's the meaning of the red visage and the glittering orbs?"

"I've had a letter—from home!" gasped Jack.

And then, in a flood, he told Pitt all about it.

"Well, I'm jiggered!" exclaimed Reggie, at length. "I wondered why you were looking as though the happiness of Arcadia had descended upon you. Why the dickens didn't you tell me all this before?"

"I couldn't. The pater made me promise not to tell anybody."

"That's just like paters!" exclaimed Reggie. "He might have made an exception of me, anyhow. Jack, old man, let me congratulate you again! You've won the scholarship, and everything's 'all right in the place where the roses grow round the door!'"

And Jack Grey sat down, feeling that all this was rather too much for him. His troubles were completely at an end.

And then—then he thought of Burnett.

CHAPTER X.

GETTING IT OFF HIS CHEST.



BURNETT was walking disconsolately about the Triangle.

He was a quiet-looking fellow, and he was so unobtrusive as a general rule that nobody knew much about his existence. He had entered for the Lytton Trust Scholarship with a grim determination to win, for this was his only chance to remain at the old school.

And now the skies had fallen.

By one mark he had been beaten, and the prize had been snatched away from him. It was little wonder that Burnett was feeling bitter, and almost sick with disappointment.

If he had been weak, he would have sobbed with the very misery which filled his being. He had been beaten on the post—by a boy who didn't require the financial benefit of the scholarship at all. That was what made this defeat so terribly hard to bear.

But Burnett kept a stiff upper lip. He was a plucky fellow. He smiled when other fellows sympathised with him. He said

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that the best man had won, and it wasn't for him to kick up a fuss.

But Burnett was in the depths of despair.

Jack Grey came out in the Triangle, and found the College House junior staring unseeingly across the playing-fields. And then Burnett turned, and caught sight of his successful rival.

He came over at once, composing himself.

"Hallo, Grey!" he said, with an effort at cheeriness. "Congratulations! You whacked me by a jolly narrow margin, but it was all fair and square. Good luck! It was a decent fight."

"Thanks!" said Grey, as he took the other junior's hand. "It's very decent of you to take it like this, Burnett. Lots of fellows would have been quite different."

"I hope I'm not a cad," said Burnett quietly. "I'm not going to be a hypocrite. I'm downright sorry I lost. And I'd have given anything in the world to beat you."

"We were both fighting as hard as nails," said Jack smiling. "I don't mind telling you, Burnett, that it meant everything to me, too. Things weren't quite as they should be at home, and I should have had to leave St. Frank's at the end of this term. Queer, isn't it? And now, after winning the scholarship, I've had a letter from the pater, saying that everything is O.K."

Burnett looked at him, and seemed to swallow something.

"I wish I could say the same!" he muttered.

"What do you mean?"

"Oh, nothing!"

"Aren't your people—I mean, won't you be able to stay after this term? I don't want to pry into your affairs——"

"Oh, it's nothing," said Burnett, his voice shaking, and his face pale with misery. "Everybody will know soon. Yes, I shall have to leave. And I was hoping against hope—— Oh, but what's the good of growling? I'm nothing but a beast to do that! I don't want to make you uncomfortable, Grey. The best man won, and there's an end of it."

Jack Grey clenched his fists.

"No, that's not an end of it!" he said grimly.

"I—I don't understand——"

"You'll understand soon, Burnett," interrupted Jack. "Don't worry, old chap. The sun's shining for me, and it'll soon be shining for you, too. There's no reason why we shouldn't both be happy."

He walked off, leaving the College House fellow in a state of wonderment—and with a vague feeling that something was going to happen. Jack had come to a sudden decision.

He made his way straight to the Headmaster's study, and tapped at the door.

"Come in!" came the Head's deep voice.

Jack Grey entered, and the Head rose to his feet.

"Ah, my boy, I intended sending for you later on," he exclaimed warmly. "Splendid!"



"Well, I'm hanged!" muttered Pitt. Jack was asleep. He had dropped off in the middle of his work. And a soft, sympathetic look came into Reggie's eyes. He felt extremely sorry for his overworked chum.

did! In spite of your illness, you came through with flying colours. You have done well, Grey—although Burnett ran you a close second. It was almost a neck and neck tussle."

"Thank you, sir," said Jack. "It was about the scholarship that I wanted to speak. When I entered, my pater was in rather a bad way—financially, I mean."

"Ah, to be sure!" said the Head sympathetically. "When I saw your anxiety I had a slight suspicion of that nature. I rather fancy that Burnett's parents are somewhat similarly placed. I feel sorry for the lad."

"Yes, but it's all right, sir!" said Jack eagerly. "You—you see, my pater's recovered his fortunes. Look—just look at this letter, sir!"

Jack handed over the glad letter, and the Head read through it with interest. Then he handed it back.

"I am indeed pleased that your father has got over his troubles," said Dr. Stafford. "It delights me to know——"

"But I don't mean that, sir," interrupted Jack quickly. "Don't you see? I'm all right in any case—I'm safe. Now that

the pater's got plenty of money, I shall stay at the school. But Burnett's people won't be able to keep him here after this term. The scholarship means nothing to me now, but everything to him."

The Head nodded.

"I quite appreciate that, my lad—and we must regard it as one of life's little ironies," he said gently. "I must confess that I do not see what you are driving at—"

"Why, the scholarship ought to go to Burnett, sir!" said Jack quickly. "Couldn't—couldn't you arrange something, sir—"

"Good gracious! Are you suggesting that you should give up the prize?"

"Yes, sir."

"But, my dear boy, it is impossible—"

"Why is it, sir?" urged Jack. "I can give it up if I like, can't I? I want you to award it to Burnett instead. It'll send him into the seventh heaven of delight."

The Head patted Jack on the shoulder.

"I admire your generous motives, Grey," he said kindly. "At the same time, I cannot see my way clear to acceding to your request. It is quite out of the question."

"But I don't feel I ought to take it, sir!" burst out Jack.

"What in the world do you mean?"

"It wouldn't be right, sir," went on Jack, the words tumbling over one another. "Burnett put up a straight, honourable fight—and I didn't! I cribbed! I—"

"Stop!" commanded the Head sternly. "What is this you are telling me? If what you say is true, it will mean a re-examination."

"Please let me tell you, sir!" pleaded the junior.

And, before the Head could stop him, Jack related the whole story. He explained about the exam papers—he related how he had made up his mind to confess all—he told the Head of his amazement and joy when he found that the actual exam. papers were different.

"My boy, I hardly know what to say," exclaimed Dr. Stafford, at length. "I admire your courage and your honesty in telling me of this—for you are under no obligation to do so."

"I had to get it off my chest, sir!"

"Strictly speaking, you have committed no actual offence—since you only looked at answers which were open to anybody," said the Head. "You must not think, Grey, that I should leave such important documents as the Lytton Scholarship examination papers on my desk. I hardly know what to do."

"Can't you award the scholarship to Burnett, sir?"

"Under all the circumstances. I must adhere to my original decision," replied the Head. "You have been so frank, Grey, and I am sure that your remorse was so genuine—that I shall accept this confession as strictly confidential. Indeed, I am proud of you. You have shown me quite plainly

that you are honourable and honest. I shall not punish you in any way. Your confession has absolved you entirely. You have atoned for your moment of temptation."

"Thank you, sir," said Jack fervently.

"If it will please you greatly, I will announce to the school that you wish to renounce all rights to the scholarship," continued the Head. "You are the winner, and I cannot make any alternation. But if you withdraw completely, it will naturally mean that the second boy on the list receives the benefits of the scholarship."

"Then—then you'll do it, sir?" shouted Jack joyfully.

"In that way—yes," said Dr. Stafford.

"But it would be quite impossible for me to announce Burnett as the winner. I must tell the school the truth—that you wish to renounce your rights."

"I—I wanted it to be done quietly, sir—"

"That is not possible," interrupted the Head. "Good gracious! If I gave Burnett the scholarship without any explanation, the school would assume that I had made a blunder, or that I had discovered something discreditable concerning yourself. No Grey. I have told you how it can be done, and you must agree to that, or not at all. It is only right that you should have the credit for your wonderfully generous sacrifice."

"But there is nothing in it, sir—"

"There is everything in it, Grey," interrupted Dr. Stafford. "You cannot tell me otherwise. Quite apart from the financial aspect, it is a great honour for any boy to win this scholarship. I admire you—I am proud of you. With regard to your moment of weakness, I have forgotten it."

Jack felt rather a lump in his throat as he went out of the Head's study.

"What a brick!" he muttered huskily.

He didn't seem to realise that there was another brick, too. And then, even before lessons began, the Head made his big announcement. It came as a great surprise to the school.

As for Burnett, he could hardly believe that he was not living in a dream. Tears of joy came into his eyes as he thanked Jack—who felt extremely uncomfortable over the whole business.

And nobody thought the less of Burnett because of his emotion. The College House junior told the whole truth—he saw no reason why he should keep it back. In fact, the story of Sir Crawford Grey's lost fortune came out—to say nothing of the story of its recovery.

And Jack Grey was the hero of the hour—as he thoroughly deserved.

From every point of view, the matter had ended satisfactorily, and there were at least two juniors in the old school who felt that life was indeed worth living.

THE END.

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4-4-0 No. 55. Rebuilt. Class B.4.

The engine illustrated on the photo card given away with this number is No. 55, shown as rebuilt. The heaviest and fastest trains on this railway have been worked by engines of the 4-4-0 type, until the trains became so heavy that the large tank engines of the 4-6-2 and 4-6-4 types were employed. This engine, No. 55, was built about twenty-two years ago, being designed by the late Mr. R. J. Billinton, the then locomotive superintendent, but has recently been rebuilt by his son, Colonel L. B. Billinton.

As originally built, these locomotives weighed, without the tender, but in working order, 51 tons 10 cwt. The cylinders, 19 in. diameter, with a piston stroke of 26 in., were inclined at 1 in 9.5, and had D slide valves. The diameters of the bogie and driving-wheels were 3 ft. 6 in. and 6 ft. 9 in. respectively. The boiler pressure was 180 lb. per square inch.

As rebuilt, these engines have cylinders 20 in. by 26 in., and a new cylinder casting, with piston valves of a special type, is fitted, and so arranged that practically all the old valve gear can be used. The diameters of the bogie and driving-wheels remain as before rebuilding. The new boiler is identical with that used on the "Mogul" engines, and the fire-box is of the Belpaire type. A

super-heater is fitted, and the boiler, 5 ft. 3 in. in diameter and 12 ft. 6½ in. long, works at a pressure of 180 lb. per square inch. The total heating surface is 1,294.4 square feet. Two Ross patent "pop" safety valves are provided on the fire-box, and the Company's "Top Feed" apparatus for supplying the boiler with water, together with a hot water injector and a Weir pump are also fitted, the latter being situated on the left-hand side of the engine. A large and commodious cab, with roof extending well over the footplate, affords the engine-man and fireman ample protection from rough weather.

The tender has a capacity of 3,600 gallons of water, as compared with the former 3,000 gallons, and 4 tons of coal are carried. The weight of the engine is now 58 tons 1 cwt., and that of the tender, 39 tons, 5 cwt. The length of the engine is 33 ft. 4½ in., the tender being 21 ft. The total length over all is 56 ft. 8 in.

The L.B. & S.C.R. main line is not an easy one; there being many stiff up-grades, junctions, etc., so that an engine, with plenty of adhesion weight, is required. This locomotive has undergone extensive trials, and such good results have been obtained that others will be similarly reconstructed at the company's works at Brighton.

Editorial Announcement.

My dear Readers,—Those of my chums who remember the excellent series of boxing stories featuring Earnest Lawrence a year or two ago will welcome with delight a complete boxing story by the same author introducing the Boys of St. Frank's and the new sports master, Mr. Harold Clifford. This is coming next week and is entitled "THE BOXING UNKNOWN!" Added to the thrills and excitements of the Ring, there is a splendid mystery running through this story which keeps one absorbed to the last page.

A CLEVER SPY STORY.

In the Detective Story Section. I am giving you two more first-rate, complete detective stories. The first, another Scotland Yard romance, entitled "A MEETING OF GREEKS!" is an exceedingly clever spy story of the time of the late war. My readers need no reminding that our late enemies were past masters in subterfuge and worming their way into high places in order to secure secret information about our plans. But our own Secret Service, containing some

of the best brains at the Yard, allowed the ex-Kaiser's henchmen enough latitude to enjoy a sense of false security, and then our enemies suddenly awoke to find that, subtle as they were, our C.I.D. men were more than a match for them. The other story, "THE CASE OF THE KRYLOFF DIAMOND!" introduces once more the famous detective, Carfax Baines.

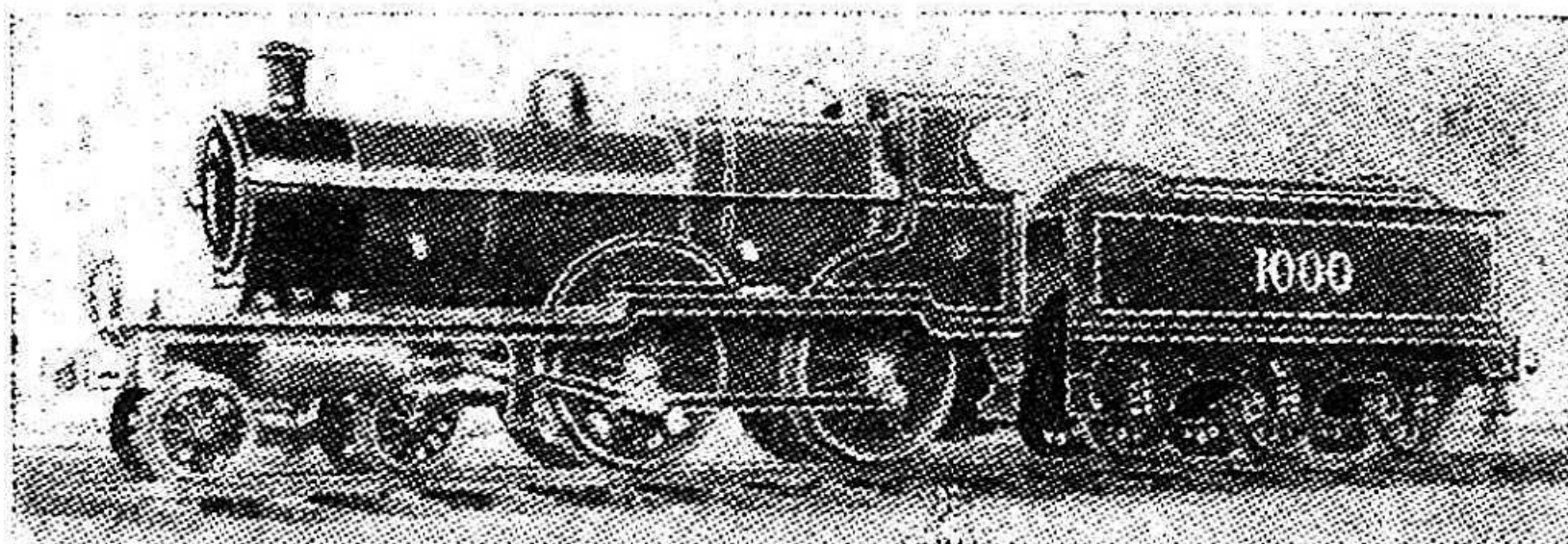
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With regard to our Prize Engine, competitors will be interested to know that this splendid working model will be exhibited at the "Model Engineer" Exhibition, Horticultural Hall, London, from January 5th to 12th. It will be shown by Messrs. Bassett-Lowke, Ltd., on their stand, No. 22. At the same time this celebrated firm of model engine makers show some other fine examples of their work. I hope that every reader who can will visit this exhibition.

Your sincere friend,

THE EDITOR.

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THE COMPETITION

began in the December 16 issue, and ends with issue dated January 27, when a list of the seven St. Frank's stories to be voted for will appear on a coupon.

All you have to do is to place the figures 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, or 7 in the blanks provided on the coupon against the titles of the stories according to how you consider they rank in order of merit, putting the figure 1 against the story you like best, the figure 2 against the story you like second best, and so on. Where you like two or more stories equally, place the same numbers against them according to their position with the other stories.

All the lists will be totalled, and from this a comparative list will be drawn up, representing the general voting of all competitors. The competitor whose individual voting most nearly corresponds to the general voting will be declared the winner.

IMPORTANT!—A small coupon, bearing title of story and date of issue, will appear every week during the competition, usually on the back of the "Answers" tag. This week it will be found at the foot of page 23 of the book. These small coupons must be cut out and enclosed with the final voting coupon.

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